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The ARYAN PATH

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THE ARYAN PATH

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(*a*) To form a nucleus of universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour ;

(*b*) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and a demonstration of the importance of such study ; and

(*c*) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

ॐ

"The wheel of Sacrifice has Love for its nave, Action for its tire, and Brotherhood for its spokes."

THE ARYAN PATH

VOL. IV AUGUST 1933 No. 8

THE LIMIT OF RESPONSIBILITY

"I have no meal for to-day, what will become of me to-morrow?"

Long ages ago this depressing question was asked by one dominated by economic forces like unto those of to-day. Some five thousand years ago it was repeated by Yudhishthira, the eldest of the five Pandavas, reduced to distress by past strifes and by an impending war. It occurs in a talk the Prince has with Krishna, his own and his brothers' benefactor and friend. In the Bhagavat Yāna Parva of the Udyoga Parva of the *Mahabharata* this is what the head of a royal house says:—

When a man born and brought up in a respectable family coveteth the possessions of others, that avarice of his destroyeth his intelligence; and intelligence being destroyed, shame is lost; and loss of shame leadeth to a diminution of virtue; and *loss of virtue bringeth on loss of prosperity.* Destruction of prosperity, in its turn, ruineth a person, for poverty is a person's death. Kinsmen and friends and Brahmanas shun a poor man as birds avoid, O Krishna, a tree that beareth neither flowers nor fruits! Even this, O sire, is death to me that kinsmen shun me, as if I were a fallen one, like the breath of life quitting a dead body! Shamvara said that no condition of life could be more distressful than that in which one is always racked by the anxiety caused by the thought—*I have no meal for to-day, what will become of me to-morrow?* . . Some men when overtaken by poverty elect death; others remove from cities to hamlets; others retire into the woods; while others again become religious mendicants to destroy their lives. Some for the sake of wealth are driven to madness; others, for wealth, live under subjection to their foes; while many others, again, for the sake of wealth, betake themselves to the servitude of others. . . . O Krishna, a man who is poor from birth is not so much distressed as one who, having once possessed great prosperity and having been brought up in luxury, is deprived of that prosperity. Having through his own fault fallen into distress, such a person blameth the very gods with Indra and his own self. Indeed,

knowledge of even the entire scriptures faileth to mitigate his pangs. Sometimes he getteth angry with his servants, and sometimes he cherisheth malice towards even his well-wishers. Subject to constant anger he loseth his very senses, and his senses being clouded, he practiseth evil deeds. . . . If he is not awakened in time, he goeth certainly, O Krishna, to hell, and, indeed, *wisdom is the only thing that can awaken him*, for, if he obtaineth back the eye of wisdom he is saved ! When wisdom is regained, such a man turneth his attention to scriptures; and attention to scriptures aideth his virtue. Then shame becometh his best ornament. He that hath shame hath an aversion from sin, and his prosperity also increaseth; and he that hath prosperity truly becometh a man. . . . He that is without shame and sense is neither man nor woman. . . . He that hath shame . . . obtaineth emancipation, which, indeed, is the highest aim of all righteous persons !

These and the words on war and peace which followed, sent Krishna to the court of the enemy, as an envoy of peace. It was the failure of His mission which brought about fratricidal war, and in the fall of the State, the individuals also fell.

The citizen is bound up with the State. The causes which lead to distress and the forces which restore prosperity form a circle—the circle of evolution. Conditions of to-day are analogous to those before the great war between the two branches of the human family—the Kauravas and the Pandavas.

Confusion, suffering, defeatism, are rampant in the world to-day. In every country many are distressed, and more are apprehensive and perplexed. The common weight of woe bears hard upon the sensitive, grieved by their impotence to set right conditions. Many such are goaded by the urge both to act themselves and to have their nation act beyond the confines of their own respective spheres, whereas their only hope of peace of mind lies in a clear delimitation of responsibility for present action for each man and each country.

Power connotes responsibility; only tyranny disclaims it. Conversely, none has responsibility beyond the lines traced by his power and his own duty. There is a fascination in the duty of another, which casts its spell no less upon the State than on the individual. It is so easy to see what calls for righting in a foreign state or in another's character or conduct—so much easier than honest self-analysis and action on the findings !

The whole task of man or State may be summed up as determining the limits of their respective responsibilities, observing those limits strictly, and discharging their duties punctiliously within them. As the State is but an aggregate of the individuals who compose it, the same rules of conduct should apply *mutatis mutandis* to both. In fact, it is to the failure to demand of the State the standard of morality observed by its foremost citizens in their private lives that have been due many of the evils of secret diplomacy, including the colony-grabbing policy. "Responsibility" is the sheepskin ever

donned by the wolves of national greed. The cant about "the white man's burden" and the Western nations' *mission civilisatrice* was but so much dust thrown in the eyes of the easily deceived majority. "To ride abroad," like medieval knights, "redressing human wrongs" appeals alike to nations and to men. None the less, "it is better to perish in the performance of one's own duty. The duty of another is full of danger." Alas! the *Gita's* warning falls often on deaf ears, until experience teaches the lesson.

But avoiding others' duty is a negative virtue. It must be balanced by the full performance of one's own. A State has not fulfilled its whole duty when any within its borders are denied equal rights or privileges on the ground of race, colour, creed, birth, or social position; when preventable misery exists side by side with prodigality, to give the lie to human brotherhood. Will any claim there is not ample scope for the efforts of statesmen and patriots of every land to set their own house in order?

The responsibility of the individual within the limits of his own duty is correspondingly vast—circumscribed only by his powers. To pay that which is due to family, community, nation, and humanity is the duty of each; how to discharge it? That question is debated by politicians, idealists and philosophers.

True progress is in terms of the development of the nobler qualities, and the only sound basis of political reform is individual regeneration. As world peace rests on the good faith of every nation, so does the commonweal depend on every citizen.

The same circle of the fall and rise of virtue was preached by another sage—Confucius. From ancient China as from ancient India the same message reaches our twentieth century. Will it listen?—

> The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the empire first ordered well their own States. Wishing to order well their States, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.
>
> Things being investigated, knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed. Their States being rightly governed, the whole empire was made tranquil and happy.
>
> From the emperor down to the mass of the people, all must consider the cultivation of the person the root of *everything besides.*

THE LIMITATIONS OF SPECULATIVE THOUGHT

[**Edmond Holmes** is the author of *The Creed of Buddha*, and *The Creed of Christ*, among other volumes. He belongs to that very small band of Westerners who read correctly the old Eastern philosophies. Although over eighty years of age, he still marches with the times, as this article clearly shows.—EDS.]

Speculative thought, on its highest level, is the attempt of the human mind to understand the universe. What it means by understanding the universe it has to find out for itself in and through the very effort that it makes to achieve that end.

Let us think of the Universe for the moment as having two antithetical ends or poles to its being,—what is ultimate in analysis, the Infinitely Little; and what is ultimate in synthesis, the Infinitely Great. How far can speculative thought hope to go in the direction of each of these poles? That its advance towards them should become increasingly difficult as it approaches them is what we have every reason to expect. For, as conscious beings, we live our lives in the middle regions between the two poles; and conceptions of the world around us which are generated by our experiences in those regions, and which work well on the whole as long as we remain there, may be expected to work less well as our thought moves towards either extreme; and we must face the possibility of their ceasing to work when the more familiar horizons of thought have been left far behind.

There is indeed a vital difference between the two extremes in respect of the concepts which we use when we are trying to investigate them. The concepts which regulate our thought in our advance towards the Infinitely Little are virtually common to all normal minds, and are therefore apt to impose themselves on us as being absolutely valid; whereas the concepts which we carry with us from the middle regions of experience when we are thinking about the Infinitely Great, vary from age to age, from people to people, from creed to creed, and —so far as men are in earnest about "great matters"—from mind to mind, and may even vary appreciably within the limits of each individual life.

We can see, then, at the outset, that of the two extremes, the Infinitely Little, the ultimate element in the scientific analysis of physical phenomena, is the more likely to yield its secrets to the inquiring mind. Yet even there the explorers who have gone furthest in the advance to their goal are beginning to find that, beyond a certain point the concepts which they brought with them and which had so far never failed them, concepts which are firmly embedded in human thought and human speech, refuse to work, and that it is not easy to find substitutes for them.

Professor Lindeman, in his

work on *The Quantum Theory*, makes this clear, and explains how it comes about. After pointing out that there are serious objections to both the corpuscular and the undulatory theory of light, he goes on to say :—

The reason for all these difficulties lies in the inadequacy of spatio-temporal description . . . . . any method of observing any particle is bound to affect the circumstances of that particle . . . . . the act of observing the one co-ordinate causes a change in the conjugated co-ordinate. Whichever two co-ordinates are chosen, for instance position and momentum, or time and energy, the accuracy of the one observation will produce an inaccuracy of the other . . . .

Why is this? In answer to this question, our author explains "how the indefinables upon which all our thought processes depend were formed" and shows "that they cannot be justified". His words, which deserve our closest attention, are as follows:—

For the description and classification of natural phenomena we use words and symbols. Symbols are defined in words, and the words, if they are to be of any service, must represent ideas which are common property amongst those who are concerned to know what has been written. In natural science certain words have assumed a specific meaning. These may be called the scientific concepts which are the basis of all discussions and calculations. A physical law expresses an accurate numerical relation between such concepts. If the law is known, then some of them can be expressed in terms of others. Ultimately, however, there must obviously be certain indefinables, in terms of which we express the other concepts. The three indefinables commonly used in physics are length, time, and mass. From these, with the help of certain systematized physical observations or laws, we can derive or express other physical concepts.

How does this method work when applied to the study of ultimate particles? Says our author :—

It is not easy to make clear the arbitrary nature of the space-time framework which we have chosen in order to describe reality. The co-ordinates are so convenient in the case of the grosser macroscopic phenomena, immediately perceptible to our senses, and have become so deeply ingrained in our habits of thought and so inextricably embalmed in our language that the suggestion that those indefinables may be meaningless, or, at the best, only statistically valid, is bound to meet with a certain amount of repugnance.

The concept of position, length, or space is based upon the possibility of determining distance. If this were in principle impossible there would not be much sense in employing any spatial co-ordinates. It has only recently become clear that an accurate measurement of distance is in principle impossible. This follows simply from the atomic structure of reality.

How it follows is then explained at some length. The upshot of it is that an endeavour to observe the position of (an ultimate) particle imparts to it motion, and so defeats itself.

It is impossible therefore to speak of any definite, accurate, ascertainable relation between one ultimate particle and another, comparable with the distance between one milestone and another. The desirability, or indeed the possibility, of describing relations between ultimate particles in terms of distance or space is thus open to grave doubt. That such relations can be established between gross material objects is due. . . to their size and rigidity, compared with the minute reactions which can be perceived. But to assume that these

concepts have any meaning when applied to ultimate particles is quite unwarranted.

It can easily be shown that the concepts of temperature, of colour, of smell are inapplicable to ultimate particles. It is the same with the concept of distance. "Observing distance [between electrons, let us say] changes it."

"When we endeavour to describe the behaviour of ultimate particles it may therefore well be meaningless to do so in terms of space and its related indefinable time." "Nevertheless," says our author "it is impossible for us, constituted as we are, to escape from spatio-temporal co-ordinates. We cannot think in other terms, we cannot even speak the new language which would be required."

So much for the Infinitely Little. A final interpretation of it by human thought is, as far as we can see, impossible, for the simple reason that the concepts which we bring with us from what I have called the middle regions of experience, and which work so well there that we take their absolute validity for granted, work less well when we are trying by their aid to study the ultimate constituents of matter, and at last cease to work. And one reason for this is that "any method of observing any particle is bound to affect the circumstances of the particle"; or, in other words, that the Infinitely Little changes under our hands while we are trying to understand it, and changes in response to the very efforts that we are making to understand it.

To understand the Infinitely Little is the business of a small group of specialists, to whom it has, as it were, been delegated by the rest of mankind. The results of their labours may indeed prove, in the last resort, of vital importance to all of us; but while they are at work they are left to their own devices, it being clearly understood both by them and by the outside world, that they are working, disinterestedly and wholeheartedly, in devotion to truth for its own sake and on behalf of their fellowmen.

But to understand the Infinitely Great is the business of each one of us, a business which he cannot delegate to others without serious loss to himself. And if the Infinitely Little withholds its innermost secrets from us, in spite of our using for the study of it concepts which are virtually common to all normal minds, and methods which are accepted as correct by all who are specializing in physical research, what hope can we have of wresting its secrets from the Infinitely Great, to the study of which we bring concepts that vary, as I have said, not only from man to man, but also in some cases—and those the most significant of all—from the man of yesterday to the man of to-day? The Infinitely Little baffles us because it changes under our hands when we are trying to understand it; but it is we ourselves who change under

our own hands (so to speak) when we are trying to understand the Infinitely Great. For, so far as the concepts that we form of the Universe in its totality and innermost reality—for this is what we mean by the Infinitely Great—are genuinely our own, we must needs react to them in character and conduct, and, therefore, modify them as the result of their helping us to modify ourselves. To transform oneself is to transform one's whole outlook on life; and to transform one's outlook is to transform oneself.

The different concepts which men form of the Infinitely Great have of course much in common. The variable elements in them which constitute in each case what is private and personal in one's outlook on the world, are small as compared with the underlying assumptions which are held in common by large masses of men, — by Catholic Christians, by Protestants, by Moslems, by Hindus, by Buddhists, by idealistic agnostics, by materialistic agnostics, and so forth. And behind all such assumptions is one which is so widely held that its validity is instinctively taken for granted by nearly all men, especially in the West, who are seriously interested in "great matters," and not by these alone but by all who meditate, if only for the passing moment, on the larger problems that challenge us.

Let us see what this is. A philosophy is an interpretation in general terms of a particular field of experience, an interpretation which satisfies the head and the heart, either or both, of the interpreter. There are many fields of experience which are sufficiently wide and important to demand philosophical interpretation; and there are, therefore, many philosophies, or branches of philosophy. Thus we have moral philosophy, political philosophy, social philosophy, the philosophy of art, of education, of economics, and many more. But in speculative philosophy proper the field of experience has no limits. It is the universe in its totality and innermost reality—this and nothing less than this—which the speculative philosopher, the metaphysician as he calls himself, desires to understand. But before he can start on his enterprise, he must come to some understanding with himself as to the nature and the range of his task. In our attempts to interpret the Infinitely Little our starting point is sense-experience, which is virtually common to all men, variations in it being easily corrected by reference to the experiences of the normal or standardized man. But what is to be our starting point when we set out to interpret the universe as a whole? What preliminary conception are we to form of the field of experience which we are going to investigate? What preliminary idea have we formed of the universe? What preliminary meaning do we attach to the word?

This is the question of questions for the speculative thinker.

But it is one which he seldom consciously asks himself ; and, so far as he does answer it, he does so instinctively and without realizing to what he has committed himself. What do we mean by "the universe" ? The average man is at no loss for an answer to this question. "We mean by the universe the world which lies around us, the world which we look out upon, the world which sense-experience reveals to us, the world to which we, as corporeal beings, belong." This, though he would not set it forth in so many words, is his answer to that large and vital question ; and he has no misgiving as to its correctness.

But there are serious objections to it. To begin with, who guarantees the intrinsic reality of the world which we look out upon ? Who guarantees that the outward and visible world is " the universe " ? Are we to say, with Aristotle, that "sense-perception proper, free from any admixture of association and interpretation," is infallible ? No. We know too much to-day about the inner constitution of the material world to be able to endorse the naïve realism of a thinker who lived more than two thousand years ago, when science was still in its infancy. But, apart from this difficulty, to which I will presently return, there is the more obvious difficulty that there are variations in sense-perception, in virtue of which different men receive different impressions of the surrounding world. If a colour-blind man (as we call him) sees green where I see red, who shall arbitrate between us ? Who is to say that I am right and that he is wrong ? I can but plead that nearly all men see things as I see them. This means that I regard the sense-experience of the normal or "standardized" man as the ultimate criterion of reality, and the world which that experience reveals to us as the real world and the whole world. (I am looking at things for the moment from the standpoint which popular thought, following the lead of Aristotle, instinctively adopts.) But in what capacity do *I*, as a standardized man, guarantee the intrinsic reality of the outward world ? Do I mean by " I " my corporeal or my self-conscious self ? The guarantee that I might give in the former capacity would obviously be worthless. If my guarantee is to be effective it must be given by the inner I, the self-conscious self, the perceiver, the thinker, the knower. But if it is given by the inner I, it is clear that I cannot give it without, in doing so, guaranteeing a higher degree of reality to myself. Unless my metaphysical credit stands high, what is the value of my guarantee ?

This is one objection to the naïve " realism " of the average man. The next objection is one which the more recent researches of physical science into the constitution of the atom have presented to our thought. The world which we look out upon is woven, so to speak, on the space-time framework. If that

world is as real as it seems to be, if it is in very truth the whole world and the only world, then the space-time framework must be absolutely real, and the space-time concept must be absolutely valid. But, as we have already seen, the space-time concept is so far from being absolutely valid that beyond a certain stage in our study of the inner constitution of the material world, beyond a certain point in our approach to the *primordia rerum*, it fails us completely and refuses to work. This failure disposes of its claim to absolute validity, and in doing so disposes of the claim to absolute reality of the world which is woven on the space-time framework.

There is another objection to the ascription of reality to that world, which we owe to the researches of the physicist. Starting with the Aristotelian assumption that sense-perception proper is infallible, and passing on from this to the further assumption that the world around us—whether supernaturally created or naturally self-existent—is in itself what it seems to be to our senses, and as such is real in its own right, physical science set to work to analyse it into its constituent elements, in the hope of finding the bedrock of its reality. This has not been found and, as far as we can see, will never be found; for there seems to be no such thing. The basis of reality in the world around us, as revealed by the labours of the physicist, is more a quicksand than a bedrock. Instability and indeterminacy* are among its leading features. The atoms which for a while science was content to think of as the "bricks of the universe," have broken up, as it pursues its researches, into ultimates—or shall I say penultimates?—which seem to defy further analysis, for the reason (as we have seen) that, beyond a certain point, we cannot observe them without changing them.

Out of these elusive penultimates, with ultimates behind them which are as yet unknown, the world of our everyday experience is unceasingly built up. How? By the interpretative action of the conscious self of man. There is no colour in the physical world, as it is known to-day to the physicist, no sound, no smell, no taste. The investigator has left all these behind him as he makes his way towards the Infinitely Little. The world has become for him "a picture in black and white". His business is to see "when a pointer coincides with a graduation in a scale" and to note the exact point. "Practically," says Sir A. Eddington, "every exact physical measurement resolves itself into a reading of this kind." It is the conscious self of man which translates the electro-magnetic waves of the physical world into colour, the

*"The result of our analysis of physical phenomena up to the present is that we have nowhere found any evidence of the existence of deterministic law."—*Physics and Philosophy*, a paper read by Sir A. Eddington.

vibrations of the air into sound, and so forth. If that is so, must we not turn, in our quest of ultimate reality, from without to within, from the phenomenal world which does not hold in itself the secret of its own phenomenal reality (if I may be allowed the paradox), to the self whose interpretative action on the constituent elements of "matter" has woven for that world the familiar garment which it wears *for us* to-day ?

To identify the physical world, which in itself is, as science assures us, a world of "shadows" and "symbols," with the universe, and to try to find the solution of all ultimate problems within its limits, is to make a baseless assumption the starting point of a hopeless quest.

We need, for the free range of speculative thought, a wider field of experience than that which the familiar world, woven as it is on the Space-time framework, allows us. If we define beforehand the universe, the All of Being, in terms of the sense-experience of the standardized man, and forbid speculative thought to look beyond that horizon, we beg the greatest of all questions in the act of asking it.

What then ?

EDMOND HOLMES

(*To be Concluded*)

Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that, possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them ! Behold how like the moon, reflected in the tranquil waves, Alaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent.

—THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

THE GITA AND SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

[**Professor D. S. Sarma** is the translator and annotator of the *Bhagavad-Gita* (special students' edition), *A Primer of Hinduism*, and *Hinduism To-day*, reviewed in our last issue.—EDS.]

In the March and the April numbers of THE ARYAN PATH Mr. G. V. Ketkar has discussed the question: "Does the *Gita* support orthodoxy?" The aim of the present article is to show that the question raised by him is only a part of a much bigger question—the question of spiritual freedom. As freedom is one of the most important aspects of spiritual life, it would be interesting to know the comprehensive teaching of the *Gita* on this subject. And I think it would be convenient if we divide the subject into three parts :—(1) Freedom from the bonds of the flesh, (2) Freedom from the bonds of the world, and (3) Freedom from the bonds of the spirit itself.

(1) The control of the animal appetites is the beginning not merely of spiritual life but even of human life. Only in spiritual life it assumes such importance that the tendency may easily develop into asceticism. Therefore the question may be asked at the outset—Does the *Gita* support asceticism ? Does it ask us to gain spiritual freedom by suppressing the flesh altogether ? Let us hear what it says :—

> Yoga is not for him who eats too much nor for him who eats too little. It is not for him who is given to too much sleep, nor for him who keeps vigils too long. But for a man who is temperate in his food and recreation, who is restrained in all his actions and who is regulated in his sleep and vigils, yoga puts an end to all sorrows.

The *Gita* accordingly recommends to us foods that promote longevity and strength, condemns in very severe terms all kinds of penances which consist in the torture of the body, and pleads everywhere for the wise direction of nature and not for its repression. According to its teaching the ideal Yogin is a resolute spirit riding his flesh with a firm hand but never using his spurs cruelly. He is a gallant rider who loves his horse and uses him to his best advantage. It is remarkable how often the *Gita* admits the strength of nature in man and recognises the importance of the sublimation of one's instincts and tendencies. I will give one or two instances :—

> Fettered by thine own tendencies, O Arjuna, which are born of thy nature, that which through delusion thou seekest not to do thou shalt do even against thy will.
>
> Even a wise man acts in accordance with his own nature. All beings follow nature. What can repression do?

Thus freedom from the bonds of the flesh is only through obedience and discipline. This preliminary discipline, by which a man gains inner control and unity, the

Gita calls Buddhi-Yoga. But it is only a precarious freedom, requiring perpetual vigilance. True freedom comes to us spontaneously and easily when we set our minds on something higher than mere self-control. In an oft-quoted verse the *Gita* says:—

The objects of sense fall away from the embodied soul when it ceases to feed on them, but the taste for them still remains. Even the taste falls away when the Supreme is seen.

Accordingly we are led on from the preliminary *buddhi-yoga* to the main yoga or fellowship with God to be gained through righteousness, love and wisdom, through Karma, Bhakti and Jnana.

(2) Just as harsh repression is not the way to freedom from the bonds of the flesh, so hasty renunciation is not the way to freedom from the bonds of the world. Just as one has to use one's body for the purposes of the spirit, so also one has to use the world for the rehabilitation of the soul. The *Gita* would whole-heartedly endorse the remark of the English poet that life is a valley of soul-making. It teaches us in a hundred different ways that spiritual freedom is not for him who runs away from the world, nor for him who becomes a slave to it, but for him who remains in it and works there in the light of a higher world. Man's activities in this world become fetters to his soul only when he is self-centred, but they become the very channels of freedom when their object is not the self. The *Gita* says:—

The world is fettered by work unless it is done as a sacrifice. Therefore, O Arjuna, give up thy attachments and do thy work as a sacrifice.

Again,

This world is not for him who makes no sacrifice, O Arjuna, much less the other.

In these passages the ideal Yogin, who remains in this world but is not affected by it, is implicitly compared to a sacrificer. But in other passages he is also compared to a faithful servant or a skilful artist. For Yoga is perfect service, it is also skill in action. The artist who is devoted to Beauty, the scientist who is devoted to Truth as well as the moralist who is devoted to Righteousness feels in his heart of hearts amidst all his activities: "Thy service, O Goddess, is perfect freedom."

It is well known that the *Gita* teaches every man to do his *Svadharma* or his own duty and thereby reach the goal of life. We have the quintessence of that teaching in the following verse:—

He from whom all beings proceed and by whom all this is pervaded—by worshipping Him through the performance of his own duty does man attain perfection.

But it is not so well known that the *Gita* connects *Svadharma* with *Svabhava* or the man's own nature. The duties of men in this world are determined both externally and internally. Externally they are determined by their station in life and internally they are determined by their own natural endowment. The latter is far more important than the former. The *Gita* clearly says:—

He who does the duty imposed on him by his own nature incurs no sin.

Thus the gospel of *Svadharma* taught by the *Gita* is connected with man's natural endowments below and the service of God above. Hence it is not only a gospel of freedom but also a gospel of beauty. For what is beauty, as some one has said, but the blissful perfection which creatures attain when they are absolutely true to the law of their own being? It is an aspect of spiritual freedom which is commensurate with the Law.

(3) By freedom from the bonds of the spirit I mean freedom from all traditions and institutions which are the embodiments of the spirit in the past. Just as harsh asceticism is not the way to freedom from the flesh, and hasty renunciation is not the way to freedom from the world, so also a total non-conformity is not the way to freedom from the rule of custom and tradition. Freedom from the institutions of the past has to be gained in the same way as freedom from the flesh and the world, that is, by obedience and transcendence, and not by rebellion and non-conformity. The wisdom of the teaching of the *Gita* on this point is remarkable. It does justice both to the authority of tradition and the sovereignty of the soul. It advises us to go to the *śastra* for guidance, but insists on our following the spirit and not the letter. As I have said elsewhere, it tolerates neither the arrogant freethinker who discards all scriptures and becomes a law unto himself, nor the blind literalist who makes a fetish of his scriptures and follows the letter of the law, killing its spirit. Hence the apparent inconsistency in some of its utterances regarding the authority of the Vedas. On the one hand it includes the study of the Vedas in its lists of virtues, because it is a means to the knowledge of God, and speaks of the divine origin of the Vedanta; but on the other hand it says that the vision of God can be gained not through the Vedas nor through gifts and penances but by exclusive devotion to the Lord. There is, however, no inconsistency in the teaching for a student who understands its general spirit. It is easy for any one to tear a passage from its context and prove that the *Gita* supports authority and not freedom or *vice versa*. There is, for instance, as Mr. Ketkar has pointed out, a passage which conservatives who want to uphold the authority of the ancient codes of law at any cost are never tired of quoting. It occurs at the end of the sixteenth chapter.

Therefore let the scripture be thy authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Knowing the scriptural law thou shouldst do thy work in this world.

If we read the whole chapter dispassionately we shall learn from the context that the *Gita* advises us to seek the guidance of the *śastra* for curbing the three deadly sins of lust, wrath and greed, and not for resisting any desirable social reform. As

against one or two texts like this upholding the authority of tradition, we have scores of texts in the *Gita* which assert the freedom of the sovereign soul.

Fools who rejoice in the letter of the Veda say, "There is nothing else but this."

As is the use of a pond in a place flooded with water everywhere, so is that of all the Vedas to a Brahman who knows.

When thy mind which is distracted by the Vedic texts rests steadfast and firm in spirit—then wilt thou gain true insight.

Even a man who merely desires to know of Yoga transcends the Vedic rule (*S'abda-Brahma*)

The Yogin who having attained to oneness worships me abiding in all beings—he lives in me *howsoever he leads his life.*

And it is interesting to note that the *Uttara Gita* which is supposed to be the sequel to the *Bhagavad Gita*—though a very poor sequel—asserts the spiritual freedom of man in rather extravagant terms:—

A boat is necessary until one gets to the other side of the river; but when a man once crosses the stream, of what use is the boat to him?

As a husbandman throws away the husk after threshing the corn, so does a wise man give up the scripture entirely and concentrate on the knowledge and insight gained through it.

As milk is not necessary for a man who has drunk nectar and is satisfied, so are the Vedas not necessary for a man who has known the Supreme.

But more than the precept, the example of the *Gita* in this matter is invaluable to us. Everywhere it follows the old Upanishadic tradition, but it extends that tradition in such a way as practically to re-create it. As I have shown in my Introduction to the Students' Edition of the *Gita*, it takes the traditional concepts of *yoga*, *karma*, *yagna*, *dharma* and *varna* and gives them a far wider connotation than they originally had.

Thus the answer which the *Gita* gives us in this part of our enquiry is the same as that which it gives us in the other two parts. It advises us to use our scriptures as we ought to use the bodies with which we are endowed and as we ought to use the worldly circumstances in which we are placed. Scriptures are not ends in themselves, but are only the means to an end; and the road to spiritual freedom lies through obedience and discipline.

D. S. SARMA

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं संतरिष्यसि ॥ अ. ४।३६

Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge.

—THE BHAGAVAD-GITA—iv-36

PSYCHOLOGY: INDIAN AND WESTERN

[**A. R. Orage**, at one time, edited *The New Age* and is now the Editor of *The New English Weekly*, which though very young has already made its mark. This contribution is more in the nature of random notes than an essay; these are informative in facts, and suggestive in thoughts. A periodic repetition of ideas, true and false, takes place; epidemics alternate with periods of health; and this is as true of the mind as of the body. Mr. Orage's remarks about Behaviourism bring out this cyclic phenomenon. There are also other ideas with which the student of Esoteric Philosophy is familiar.—EDS.]

A good deal of the Western failure to realise the priceless values of ancient Indian culture is due, I believe, to its association with the East and the Oriental. In a very general sense there is, no doubt, a radical difference between the East and the West, just as there is between the North and the South; but it is as profound a mistake to identify Indian culture with the East as it would be to identify, let us say, Plato, with the South merely because he happened to be a South European. This identification of India, which stands for the Aryan culture of an Aryan people, with the whole of the "East," has resulted in two serious misunderstandings. In the first place, the "East" has been given a much higher rank than properly belongs to it in the history of culture; and, in the second place, Indian thought and literature have been given a much lower place than they merit. It is necessary, I think, to detach India from the general concept of the "East," and to associate Indian culture with the other great cultures of the world, the Egyptian, the Greek and the Roman. By so doing we not only remove from the pure Aryan culture of India the local associations which now unduly cover it, but we make it impossible for world-students to neglect its conscientious study. I have been amazed to find, for instance, students of the Egyptian, the Greek and the Roman cultures, who are not ashamed to admit complete ignorance of Indian culture. They would dislike to be caught tripping over the order of the Dynasties, the relative ranks of Æschylus and Euripides, or the illustrious names of the Augustan period; but they would be rather gratified than ashamed to confess ignorance of Vyasa, the Upanishads and Shankara. I believe, on the other hand, that it is impossible to be a "good European" and, still less, a man of the cultured world, without at least as much informed appreciation of Indian as of Egyptian, Greek and Roman authors. Moreover, I believe that it is precisely for the lack of this essential element that European and world cultures are now languishing. It is all the more important, therefore, that India and Indian culture should be free from their adventitious associations with the "East" and claimed and ac-

knowledged to be the spiritual possession and now the birthright of the modern man.

* * *

One of the characteristic movements in current science is the attempt to explain psychology in terms exclusively of physiology. The School of Bechterev in Russia was the pioneer of the Behaviourism of America, and from these two centres the world of Psychology has for the moment been almost completely conquered for Physiology. To such a degree has the conquest been carried that it is now not only unfashionable, but even a little heretical, to profess to believe in a "psyche" at all; and from dispensing with the the hypothesis of an indwelling subject of experience, the more extreme members of the School of Reflexology or Behaviourism have even come to deny, as unprovably subjective, the fact of consciousness itself. This of course, is emptying out the baby with the bath with a vengeance. You set out as a psychologist to discover the significance of consciousness, the meaning of ego, and the interactions of consciousness and organism; and you end by denying consciousness and affirming organism alone. Psychology, in short, has ceased to exist, and only Physiology remains.

* * *

It would be another blunder, however, to assume that this school is uniquely and typically Occidental—and thus to set it in combative contrast with "Indian" thought. Indian culture in respect of the study of psychology is so rich that practically no theory can be advanced to-day that has not been anticipated and thoroughly explored in recorded Indian thought. There is no doubt whatever that Behaviourism, even in its most refined and comprehensive statement in Bechterev's Reflexology, is in India as old as the hills. At least three of the six great schools of Indian thought, classified by Max Müller, are both "atheist" and behaviouristic; and I am inclined myself to discover the same polarity of theory in the two scientific schools of Buddhist thought. In other words, Behaviourism is not new; it is not exclusively Occidental; and it is not in contrast with Indian thought. What distinguishes "Western" from Indian culture in respect of the science of Psychology is not the presence or absence of a school of rigid Behaviourism or even the presence or absence of the assumption of the reality of Consciousness. I repeat that for every school of Psychology in the modern West a parallel and a forerunning analogue can be found, not in the vague "Orient," but, in Aryan Indian literature. On the other hand—and this is of paramount importance—it is *not* true of Indian Psychology that all its schools are yet represented in Western thought. On the contrary, on this very matter of the reality of Consciousness, and its prime importance in Psy-

chology (in contrast with the place, if any, it occupied in Behaviourism),—outside of one or two students, of whom Dr. Daly King, of Columbia University, is the best-known, there is practically no *psychological* school to represent it in the West. (I naturally do not regard Berkeleyan idealists as other than philosophers; they are not psychologists in the strict sense.) The distinction is, therefore, as I say, not one of contrast between Indian and modern Western thought, but one of comparison; and the conclusion to be drawn, it seems to me, is that whereas modern Western Psychology is disposed to identify itself more and more with Behaviourism, including the practical denial of Consciousness, *Indian* Psychology, though it includes Behaviourism among its schools, is not only disposed to, but in its ripest students does, identify itself more and more with pure Psychology. It is as if, with a longer period of study and more favourable conditions for it, Indian culture in respect of Psychology had mapped out and intensively explored every possible view, including Behaviourism, but only to concentrate more and more on pure Psychology; whereas, on the other hand, Western Psychology, having only relatively recently begun its serious study, is not only disposed to believe it has found something new in Behaviourism, but is disposed to confine itself to that extreme and partial school. But it is all the more important, if this is the case, that the values of Indian culture should be reasserted in precisely this field. It would be as great a calamity for Western Psychology to get "stuck" in Behaviourism, with the triumphant example of Aryan Indian culture to show it the way out, as it would have been if, say, the English Drama got "stuck" in the mystery-plays of the Middle Ages and had never been introduced, via the Renaissance, to the invigorating antecedent models of the Greek drama. For exactly as the English stage, in the absence of the impulse from an ancient superior culture, would have remained essentially "provincial," Western Psychology, in the absence of familiarity with the superior examples of Psychological studies, recorded in Indian literature, is likely not only to remain "provincial" but eventually to become positively "rustic".

* * *

It is one of the lesser-known traditions of the Greek Drama that its earliest exponents *lived to create it.* Everybody is, of course, aware, that for several centuries before dramas were written down, memorised, rehearsed and presented, their authors had been in the habit of improvising them. The Schools of Rhetoric undoubtedly originated in this way by degeneration. But there is all the difference in the world between preparing oneself to improvise a part in a great drama and preparing to write a play for others to memorise and

enact. In the first, the indispensable discipline is of oneself; in the second it is primarily that of words. Consider what it entailed by way of self-preparation, for example, to be able on a great public occasion and upon a theme suggested at the moment, to determine one's part in relation to the developing whole and to improvise the actions and, above all, the speeches appropriate to it. In the Italian Commedia delle Arti we have merely the popular survival of it; but in the greatest days of the Greek Drama, before plays were composed, written down and memorised for production, this art of improvisation was carried to such a degree of mastery that, on occasion, the actor-dramatists actually spoke the language and played the rôles of, as it were, gods.

I mention this to draw another distinction between Indian and Western Psychology in favour of the Indian. It would be unfair to say that Western Psychologists are for the most part content with observation only, while the great Indian Schools of Psychology have required of themselves both observation and personal experience. But it is not unfair to say that, on the whole, the method of Western psychologists has been that of experimentation upon others, whereas the method of Indian Psychology has required self-experimentation first and foremost. The result is to be seen in the consequent contrast of the ultimate products. A great "psychologist" in the Western sense is not expected to be great in personal experience. It is enough that he knows more about the science of Psychology than anybody else and has arrived at his conclusions by the accepted methods of observation, deduction and verification by experiment. But in the field and tradition of Indian Psychology, whether, in fact, a great psychologist was always a great soul also, at least he was and is expected by repute to be one. It is true that for results in psychological self-development, objective criteria are difficult to set up for common acceptance, and perhaps, on that account if for no other, so-called subjective results are discounted in the Western scientific method. But, on the other hand it is also true that in psychology, of all sciences, literally nothing of real value can be learned by observation alone or even by experiment upon others, since the latter also is only a form of observation. What, however, is needed is a means or a language for expressing subjective results in objective terms—terms, that is, intelligible and accessible to scientific students. We need, in short, a language that shall be common to students of Psychology in both the Indian and the Western traditions. And only then, I believe, will it be clearly demonstrated that in all important respects Indian Psychology is at least several centuries of culture in advance of the Western.

A. R. ORAGE

THE DISCOVERER OF OXYGEN

[**Dorothy Turner, M.A., B.Sc., Ph.D.** (London), of the University of Bratislava (Czechoslovakia) takes it for granted that Priestley discovered Oxygen on the 1st of this month of August, 1774. But can we be certain that Oxygen—of course under another name—was unknown to remote antiquity? And with regard to that which Priestley made famous as phlogiston, perhaps the time is not very far distant when science may want to re-adopt the derided name. One of the great Theosophical Adepts once wrote:—

> We believe in the much laughed at *phlogiston*, and in what some natural philosophers would call *nisus* the incessant though perfectly imperceptible (to the ordinary senses) motion or efforts one body is making on another—the pulsations of inert matter—its life. The bodies of the Planetary spirits are formed of that which Priestley and others called Phlogiston and for which we have another name.]

In these days of sub-division and extreme specialization of scientific studies, it is pleasant to look back to a time when there was no distinction between what we now call science and philosophy, when the experimenter, as well as the thinker on the Olympian hilltops, not only recorded observations but tried to assess their value. Thus to the investigation of nature was added that contemplation which earned for the thinker the title of *philosopher* or lover of wisdom.

In times past a philosopher took all learning for his province. Even in the late eighteenth century it was not incongruous for a minister of religion to do original experiments in chemistry and in electricity, to write comprehensive histories on the development of the sciences, to write on history and political theory, to study Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic, to take part in current theological and political arguments and to preach the Gospel. Such manifold activities mark the life of Joseph Priestley (1733–1804).

Priestley was gifted with that first requisite of a scientific investigator, namely, an unbounded curiosity. He had many opportunities for following up those studies to which his natural curiosity led him. Indeed Priestley's duties always left him abundant leisure and time seems to have ambled very pleasantly with him. He began the serious study of chemistry and electricity in his spare time as a teacher of classics. Later he was appointed as pastor in charge of a chapel at Leeds. For several years he experimented in chemistry and carried out his duties to his congregation. He gained a considerable reputation among the men of science of his day and was honoured by the French Academy by being made a foreign associate. For some years he acted as librarian and literary companion to Lord Shelburne who generously allowed him an annuity even after he had left his service. The years spent with his wealthy patron were the

most fruitful of Priestley's life. Not only did he have a congenial post, but he had leisure for his own studies, quiet rooms in which to work and the advantage of intercourse with other philosophers both in London and on the Continent.

When Priestley left his patron to take up duties once more as a minister of religion, he was still able to continue such friendly discussions with the cultivated men of his time. His new post was at Birmingham. There he became a member of a scientific club called the *Lunar Society*. Members used to meet on Mondays nearest the full moon as this enabled members to have the safety of the moonlight as they dispersed to their homes, no unimportant matter in those days of footpads. At these meetings, Priestley used to meet Erasmus Darwin, James Watt, Josiah Wedgwood and William Herschel. Unfortunately for Priestley he allowed himself to be drawn aside from purely scientific discussions and to enter into theological and political arguments. He thus brought trouble upon his own head through the publication of unorthodox views. Priestley's liberal attitude was misinterpreted and his sympathy with the revolutionaries in France led to the sacking of his house by the Birmingham mob. He escaped to London but his position became so unbearable that he emigrated to America. He settled in Pennsylvania where his last years were spent in tranquillity.

Although Priestley's controversial writings have been forgotten, he will always be remembered as an original experimenter who added considerably to our knowledge of gases. His researches were commenced when he was a minister in Leeds. It happened that next door to his house there was a brewery. Priestley was curious about the processes involved in beer-making and so decided to examine the gas given off from the fermenting liquids. Thus it was mere chance that set him working on the study of gases, a subject which he advanced so far that he was given the title of Father of Pneumatic Chemistry.

Priestley identified the gas of the brewery with "fixed air," which we now know as carbon dioxide. Like other chemists of his day, Priestley spoke of gases as kinds of air. He investigated the properties of this "fixed air" as well as those of many other gases including inflammable air (hydrogen), ammonia (alkaline air), hydrochloric acid (acid air) and sulphur dioxide (vitriolic acid air). In experimenting with gases, he adopted the methods in use at the time. Before his day, chemists had learnt to collect gases by letting them displace water in a jar. Priestley went one stage further and collected gases by displacement of mercury. He was thus able to examine gases which were soluble in water and which would have escaped detection on the older methods. Priestley gave an account of these researches in

a work of six volumes published between 1774 and 1786 entitled: *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air.* The work is of considerable interest. It describes the homely apparatus with which he worked and, since it is a laboratory record rather than a summary of his work, it enables us to follow how he worked and how he arrived at his conclusions. It shows how Priestley's open and original mind led him to seek out many paths of investigation. But it shows also that there were many loose ends in his thinking, that he failed to follow up many a useful clue and that he frequently marred a good experiment by a too-facile interpretation.

The most important of Priestley's work on gases was his discovery of Oxygen on August 1st 1774. He was then in London staying at the residence of his patron in Berkeley Square. The discovery was the result of chance, and indeed it seems as if the very unmethodical character of Priestley's work enabled him many times to stumble upon something new. He had already obtained several different "airs" by heating various substances. Why not try others? It happened that he possessed a powerful convex lens or burning glass and this gave him a ready means of heating small quantities of a substance enclosed in a glass vessel, for he merely had to concentrate the sun's rays upon it by means of the lens. He tells us that it was quite by chance that he decided to heat red calx of mercury to see if any "air" could be obtained from it. Referring to this experiment he says:—

> . . . . The contents of this section will furnish a very striking illustration of the truth of a remark which I have more than once made in my philosophical writings . . . that more is owing to what we call *chance*, that is, philosophically speaking, to the observation of *events arising from unknown causes*, than to any proper *design*, or preconceived theory in this business . . . . . For my own part, I will frankly acknowledge, that at the commencement of the experiments recited in this section, I was so far from having formed any hypothesis that led to the discoveries I made in pursuing them, that they would have appeared very improbable to me had I been told of them; and when the decisive facts did at length intrude themselves upon my notice, it was very slowly, and with great hesitation, that I yielded to the evidence of my senses.

We can well imagine Priestley's surprise when he saw the red calx change to gleaming mercury, a colourless "air" being given off meanwhile. He found that a candle burned in this new air with a vigorous flame and that mice lived in it longer than in the same volume of ordinary air. In other respects it seemed to him to resemble ordinary air. As the new air appeared beneficial to the mice, he tried the effect of breathing it himself and felt a curious exhilaration. "Who can tell," he said, "but that in time, this pure air may become a fashionable article of luxury. Hitherto only two mice and myself have had the privilege of breathing it." He even suggested that the new air might relieve patients suffer-

ing from pneumonia. It is no wonder that he felt a naïve delight in his discovery.

Later, Priestley sought some explanation of these remarkable results. A chance observation is indeed a rare occurrence and is usually without significance unless it is interpreted according to some philosophical scheme. That which suggested itself to Priestley was one with which he and all other chemists of his day were familiar, namely the *Phlogiston Theory*. This theory, which sounds so curious to our ears to-day, was an attempt to explain combustion. A mysterious substance *Phlogiston*, the principle of fire, was believed to be present in all inflammable bodies. During the process of burning, it was held that the body parted with its Phlogiston. The calcination (*i.e.* oxidation) of a metal was thus regarded as the loss of its Phlogiston. It was the calx (oxide) that was regarded as the element, while the substance that we call the elementary metal was held to be a compound.

Now Priestley had noticed that his newly-found gas helped things to burn readily. In terms of the current theory, he therefore interpreted this fact by saying that it helped them to part with their Phlogiston. In order to absorb Phlogiston so easily, Priestley thought that his new gas must be devoid of Phlogiston in the first instance. He therefore called it *Dephlogisticated Air*.

So far Priestley's reasoning was clear enough. But when he tried to explain why the red calx, (a substance remaining after mercury had "given up its Phlogiston") should be able to give off a further supply of Phlogiston, he found himself entangled with difficulties. Indeed his views on this point were never clearly expressed. It never occurred to him that the very difficulties he encountered showed that the Phlogiston Theory was inadequate to explain the new facts. He still clung to the theory. His last work, published during his retirement in America, was a gallant defence of the old theory: *The Doctrine of Phlogiston Established*, written some twenty years after further experiments had shown decisively that the theory had outworn its usefulness.

Like many another man of mature years, Priestley was reluctant to give up beliefs which he had long held. Moreover, his interests were so varied that he had never given his whole heart to scientific investigation. For instance, his vocation as a minister of religion often intruded itself into his thinking as when he said:—

> Let it be remembered, that a taste for science, pleasing, and even honourable as it is, is not one of the highest passions of our nature, and the pleasures it furnishes are even but one degree above those of sense; and therefore that temperance is requisite in all scientifical pursuits. Besides the duties of every man's proper station in life, which ought to be held sacred and inviolate, the calls of piety, common friendship, and many other avocations ought

generally to be heard before that of study. It is therefore only a small share of their leisure that most men can be justified in giving to the pursuit of science.

These words which are quoted from the characteristically discursive preface to his work: *The History and Present State of Electricity with Original Experiments* (1767) suffice to sum up Priestley's attitude towards scientific studies. Brilliant though his inferences sometimes were, he preferred to let his mind sweep over a wide field rather than to limit himself to a single line of intensive investigation. He liked to write comprehensive histories on Vision, Light and Colours, on Electricity, on the Rise and Fall of Empires and on the Corruption of Christianity. Great experimenter though he was, his attitude was that of child-like happiness and wonder rather than of complete absorption in a task demanding his whole powers. He never professed to be a chemist and perhaps never appreciated his own work. He was, as Cuvier said "Le père de chimie moderne que ne voulait pas reconnaître sa fille".

DOROTHY TURNER

The Sun being the heart and brain of our pigmy Universe, we might compare its *faculae*—those millions of small, intensely brilliant bodies of which the Sun's surface away from the spots is made up—with the blood corpuscles of that luminary—though some of them as correctly conjectured by science are as large as Europe. Those blood corpuscles are the electric and magnetic matter in its sixth and seventh state. What are those long white filaments twisted like so many ropes, of which the *penumbra* of the Sun is made up? What—the central part that is seen like a huge flame ending in fiery spires, and the transparent clouds, or rather vapours formed of delicate threads of silvery light, that hangs over those flames—what—but magneto-electric aura—the *phlogiston* of the Sun?

—FROM A LETTER OF AN ADEPT

THE HOLY MEN OF HINDUSTAN

[**Paul Brunton** has had an all-round experience in journalism and has been editor of *World Trade*, and other business periodicals. Mysticism and Eastern Philosophy have been his private study for many years and he intends to specialise on these subjects in future writings. Mr. Brunton travelled widely in India during 1930 and 1931. He spent much time in investigating at first hand the present day lives and teachings of the Yogis, and in gathering literary material. Since his return to England he has been working on a book dealing with the subject of the present article, to be published this year under the title of "Secret India".—EDS.]

A Westerner once came down into the Punjab plains on a mission of conquest but some folk he encountered there caused him to strike off at an unexpected tangent, until he came dangerously near to forgetting his primal purpose. Alexander the Great was looking for a vaster land than his own to put under his sceptre, but if he came as a soldier he was forced to finish as a philosopher. His swoop across icy mountains and parched deserts gave him not an extra square inch of soil in the sequence, but it gave the Greek and Roman scribes new subjects for their pens.

I have often speculated about the thoughts which were running through Alexander's brain as he drove his chariot up the streets of Taxila, ancient city of learning, but now almost faded off the map of India. I have likewise wondered what would have happened to the spiritual history of later Europe if his troops had not been broken in will by the intolerable heat of India's summer, and if they had not refused to cross the seas and march on to further victories. It is not difficult to perceive that the Macedonian king who fell under the spell of the Yogis he encountered, who spent days at a time eagerly questioning them and warmly discussing their philosophy, needed only a few more years' sojourn in their midst to startle the West with new departures in policy.

The men he met hardly differ from some who can be met today, except that real Yogis are now very rare and require more than a little search before they can be found. There exist, however, a class of men who might be called their degenerate descendants, if the qualifying adjective be accepted in its strictly philological sense rather than in its current insulting connotation. I refer to the sadhus and faquirs, who still abound and form a five or six-figure population.

Much nonsense has been written in the West about these little known people. Europeans in India usually regard them as humbugs, hypocrites, madmen, thieves, beggars, idlers and what not, and finish up by calling them "a burden on the country". At least, this is the impression I gained from my interviews with members of the official and non-official communities. Europeans

who have never left Europe but have heard of the sadhus, usually regard them with mingled awe, fear and curiosity.

Many of these "holy men" will answer to the first description and are fit only to be put in jail. Some, however, are quite the reverse. I have met really noble men among them. If the former are indeed a burden, the latter are a blessing and have done much to keep alive what there is of idealism and spirituality in the country. That the undesirables are in the majority is plainly evident; this is the sad result of time's inevitable activity, but it need not blind us to the presence of the saving remnant who shine out all the more.

An ascetic, recluse, or wandering monk is called a "sadhu" if he follows some Hindu religion or philosophy, and he is called a "faquir" if he holds an Islamic belief. The Yogi represents the cream of the sadhus, which is precisely why the genuine kind is so rare.

The sadhus usually belong to different groups or societies; perhaps the most respected are those like the Sanyasis of the Order of Sri Sankara Acharya, who go about to proclaim the teachings of their famous Patriarch exactly as they did over one thousand years ago, and those like the Monks of the Ramakrishna Mission, who engage in useful social services but form an association which is quite modern.

Most of the holy men wear a salmon-coloured robe, others are almost naked save for a loin cloth; many shave their heads while others wear their hair long and unkempt. Some spend an entire lifetime in one place, but the majority wander like gypsies all over the country. The wandering and begging monks of India have their historical correspondence in the wandering and begging Dominicans of Europe. But the important difference is this: you can meet these monks anywhere in India to-day, but you cannot meet a begging friar anywhere in the West nowadays. I mention this contrast to emphasise that the spirit of religious asceticism has, among ourselves, become enclosed within the walls of monasteries and churches, whereas it still penetrates and affects Hindu homes of to-day.

One meets such a bewildering variety among the sadhus that one hesitates to affix a label either of praise or blame upon the whole race. I completely understand and sympathise with those hot-headed Indian students of the Presidency capitals, who assured me that the extermination of all these "parasitic sadhus" would constitute a great blessing for India. I equally understand and sympathise with those milder spirits who, older in years and residents of quieter towns, informed me that if Indian society ceases to find a place for its holy men, a noxious materialism will be its inevitable doom.

It is a problem not without its importance in other directions,

for in modern India economic distress is compelling certain revaluations. Those who emit diatribes against the Sanyasi because he fulfils no useful economic function in India are justified where reference is made to the man who takes up this rôle as a substitute for a more laborious avocation; but where the call is perfectly genuine we must replace recrimination with respect, if not with reverence. The real difficulty lies, of course, in our inability to judge the hidden motives of other men.

We need to remember that loss on the material side of a nation's balance sheet, may be compensated for by gain on the spiritual side. Are there to be only men of the plough and no men of the spirit? Are none to be given the opportunity to make a whole-time search for the Truth? Does not a true saint repay us a thousandfold for the bit of bread or plate of rice we give him? The average Westerner in India has rarely sought to understand the deeper motives of the *genuine* sadhu but is content to judge by surface appearances. Perchance, beside some well he sees such a man. Years of austerity reveal themselves in an emaciated body, a lean face and ashen skin. The European turns away disgusted. He has not perceived the heart-eating love for things divine which has swept this unattractive man out of the currents of humanity's normal existence. He has not seen the same vision in the night which revealed to this poor sadhu the presence of a higher power, and which drove him out to tread an unconventional path. Even where the Westerner is not repelled, he fails to understand the Oriental mystic and looks upon him as a lethargic creature, dreamer in and of a different world to his own.

I have met real saints among these sadhus. They live as Jesus and the apostles lived, wandering the land from village to village, carrying neither scrip nor purse, but carrying always the benediction of spiritual serenity. Since these men have theoretically renounced the world in order to find God, they are presumed to possess no money and have to live by soliciting their food and shelter. A teaching monk once said to me: "We have struck a bargain with the world. We say: 'You support our bodies and we shall support your souls; we shall carry spiritual comfort and teaching wherever we go. Give us in exchange a place where we can sleep and fill our begging bowls with food.' Since we have ceased all efforts to acquire worldly riches and devote our thoughts and lives to God and His service among men, is it not a fair bargain?"

There is an unpleasant side to this picture. Because some fine men have donned the orange robe, we need not forget that there is more chaff than wheat among the rest. Who can estimate the exact proportion of lazy tramps who peregrinate India and live upon the gullibility of illiterate people,

though in the cities they are frequently recognised for what they are? Swarms of ignorant and untaught sadhus wander through the villages and attend the periodic religious fairs in certain cities; they cannot teach because they have learnt little themselves; they cannot uplift others because their own characters are of a low order. One sees repulsive men, smeared with mud, ashes and dirt, in the streets of those towns which have become centres of pilgrimage. They are bogey-men to the children and impertinent, importunate beggars to adults. They do not hesitate to abuse those who refuse them money. They have the impudence to call themselves Yogis, and since the real Yogis are mostly recluses and rarely met with, a slur has been brought upon what was formerly an honoured title.

So one learns that one must strip the spiritual skin off a man, whether he be vain humbug or saintly hermit, if his real worth is to be estimated. Just as the single classification of "Writer" covered both Shelley and the miserable Grub Street hacks who ground out political verses for a pittance, so the term "Yogi" has covered both Ramakrishna and the lazy beggars who persistently solicit alms from the industrious.

A further confusion arises in the Western mind because of the existence of so-called Yogis who practise extereme forms of asceticism. Indeed, I find that the popular idea of a Hindu Yogi, so far as I have made inquiries among several persons, is that of someone sitting on a bed of sharp spikes and pretending to enjoy himself; or of a man holding one arm aloft in the air until he grows nails half a yard long. The popular idea is both right and wrong, because the lowest order of Yogis are truly of this kind, yet all the other orders are entirely different. These self-torturing ascetics are simply ignorant men who have mistaken the means for the end. In other words they have adopted and greatly distorted certain ideas of body-control which belong to the science of Hatha Yoga.

The real Yogis, who have a proper understanding and due appreciation of their mysterious science, are rare figures in India nowadays. I fear that the globe-trotting tourist never meets them. Only the sincere lover of wisdom is likely to contact them for he alone, of resident or visiting Europeans, will think it worth while to search the land until he locates them. Whether it be in the solitude of some hidden sanctuary or amid the turmoil of a crowded city, their discovery will amply repay the trouble. Such men carry their credentials on their faces, for there is a perennial benignity and spiritual grandeur about them which is unmistakable.

PAUL BRUNTON

SPINOZA AND THE UPANISHADS

A COMPARISON IN ETHICS

[**M. S. Modak, M. A., Ph. D.** is an Assistant Inspector of Schools in India. The following is part of a chapter in the writer's thesis for the Doctorate degree of the University of London.—EDS.]

Critics have questioned the possibility of an ethics in the Upanishadic philosophy, and it is noteworthy that the same objection should have been raised against the system of Spinoza. A familiar argument of these critics is that no room can be found for ethical doctrine in a system that does not postulate a personal God as the ultimate reality. Neither in Spinoza nor in the Upanishads, has Reality been conceived in a way that would admit of personal attributes. Further, it is generally believed that both these teachings are pantheistic. The contention therefore that ethics must be impossible in such a case is freely asserted. If all is one, it is asked, how can we have moral relations? So also, if Reality is through and through determined with an immanent necessity, where is the room for ethics in Spinoza's system? What right has Spinoza to talk of an ideal life or an ideal human nature at all? If the Upanishadic hypothesis that God is in man is accepted, where is the room for ethical endeavour?

When Reality is taken in its total being it is completely real and perfect. So the Upanishadic position is that the Absolute is perfection. The modal apprehension of reality admits degrees of perfection. Although all things follow with the same inevitable necessity from God's nature, they differ from one another in degree of perfection or reality. And this moreover is a specific difference. In a letter to W. Van Bleyenberg, Spinoza writes :—

> . . . . It is indeed true that the ungodly express the will of God according to their measure, but they are not therefore to be in any way compared to the pious. For the more perfection anything has the more does it participate also in Deity and the more does it express the perfection of God. Therefore since the pious have incalculably more perfection than the ungodly their virtue cannot be compared with that of the ungodly.*

Spinoza's metaphysical position is that all things, in and for themselves, are of necessity as real as they can be. But all things in and for themselves are not *equally* and completely real or *equally* and completely perfect. The conception of degrees of reality therefore is the basis of Spinoza's ethical doctrine. Now this conception of degrees of reality is also applicable to human life.

> We conceive as completely and adequately as possible all that man, so far as follows from within the four corners of his essential nature, of neces-

* p. 151. *Correspondence of Spinoza*, A. Wolf.

sity is and does. This conception serves as a pattern by which we estimate the goodness or badness—the moral value of everything which comes under the scope of our ethical investigations.*

The terms "good" and "bad" do not express the nature of things as they really are in and for themselves, but "they express that nature as it is *for us*, under the determinate circumstances of the task in which we are engaged".† And that task is our endeavour to form an ideal human nature, a pattern for our life and conduct.

A conception of degrees of reality is to be also found in the Upanishads whenever phenomenal aspects of reality come under discussion. "Monism does not mean an obliteration of the distinction between good and evil."‡ True, that so far as the Absolute is concerned there are no degrees at all. The conception of degrees has meaning only for the finite intelligence which distinguishes things—or to use Spinoza's phraseology—which resorts to modal apprehension. Besides this conception of degrees of Reality, there is another aspect of the Upanishadic teachings that provides for practical ethics. The goal of self-realisation is to be attained by means of a moral life, conducted in accordance with a prescribed code. It is obvious therefore that both the systems have made a legitimate provision for ethics.

The ethical categories made use of are not, however, given a supreme position, and their inferiority as compared with the metaphysical categories is stressed quite distinctly by Spinoza and the Upanishads as well. "The moral categories are not ultimate; not valid as metaphysical categories. But they are valid and objective within the limits of human conduct and life."§ The philosophical structure erected by Spinoza is based ultimately on his metaphysical categories and the thought of the Upanishads also exhibits a similar structure. The validity, therefore, of ethical categories is not ultimate in the philosophy of Spinoza and in that of the Upanishads. Morality is the preparation for the ultimate goal of "knowledge and love of God" in the case of Spinoza, and of "self-realisation" in the case of the Upanishads. In the Upanishadic philosophy Ethics are taken for granted. This is a fact that is often lost sight of. Ethics seem to have been pushed to the background in all systems predominantly metaphysical. But the Upanishads make morality a necessary preliminary to religion. The *Katha-Upanishad* asserts that "he who is always impure fails to reach the highest good." Another runs: "He who has not ceased from immoral conduct cannot realize the Self through

* p. 243. *A Study of the Ethics of Spinoza*; Joachim.

† p. 243. Vide Supra.

‡ p. 208. *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, Radhakrishnan.

§ p. 250. *A Study of the Ethics of Spinoza*; Joachim.

the intelligence." A third passage says: "One cannot get to the Self if one is not self-restrained." Pure moral categories are not made the pivot of their systems of thought by Spinoza and the writers of the Upanishads. "Whatever else one may have to say of the ethical thinking contained in the Upanishads, this at least must be admitted at the outset that it is conducted in full view of the wider implications of human existence."* The realisation of the one-ness with Deity is the ideal of man set forth in the Upanishads. Morality is valuable only as leading to this highest perfection. So, also, the goal and consummation of moral life, in Spinoza, is "intellectual love". It might be inferred that the perfection or the goal towards which morality is said to lead ultimately is something devoid of ethical nobility. Such, however, is not the case. For, as Dr. Caird says "..... the ethical in Spinoza's aim and intention was the goal to which the metaphysical part of his philosophy pointed,"† and it is none the less true that the ethical part of Spinoza's philosophy is based on the metaphysical. So, also, the goal of life laid down in the Upanishads—*viz.*, the realisation of the one-ness with God, does not only possess ethical nobility, but is in addition given a practical aspect by those thinkers on the strength of their personal spiritual experience.

When we compare the Hindu (the Upanishadic) view of life with the one indicated by Spinoza's philosophy, we find very remarkable resemblances. Just as in his thinking about the nature of reality Spinoza was actuated by the desire to discover something which would give him "a joy continuous and supreme to eternity"; so the writers of the Upanishads were actuated by the desire to find "that which, being known, there might prevail eternal bliss".

> There was the same desire for release from the meshes of the lower and for escape to the highest and the quest had the same religious character. With the thinkers of the Upanishads the quest was pre-eminently a practical one and with Spinoza it was an ethical one.‡

Religion, to the writers of the Upanishads, was not so much correct belief as righteous living. Compare the following words of Spinoza—"Religion is universal to the human race; wherever justice and charity have the force of law and ordinance, there is God's kingdom." This characteristically tolerant spirit is the pre-eminent feature of both the systems.

> He [Spinoza] assured the Van der Spycks that their religion was quite good and that they need have no misgivings whatever, so long as their conduct was good and upright. Good conduct and pure motives, these were the most essential things and devoted as he (Spinoza) was to truth, he maintained that Turks and heathens who did their duty and loved their fellowmen were filled

* *Hindu Ethics*, Mackenzie.

† p. 223. *Spinoza*, Caird.

‡ p. 68. *Hindu Ethics*, Mackenzie.

with the spirit of Christ, whom Spinoza regarded as the highest type of manhood.*

He was an intellectual religionist and so were the sages of the Upanishads.

It has already been said that morality has been treated in the Upanishads as a preliminary to the mystical goal of self-realisation. Moral values therefore cannot be judged apart from the mystical values. The moral and mystical are invariably linked. The Upanishadic mysticism is based upon the sure and explicit foundation of morality and so also it might safely be said that according to the Upanishads morality in the end culminates in a mystical attitude. With Spinoza, too, morality must lead finally to the intellectual love of God. There is a divergence of opinion as to what this intellectual love of God actually connotes. It must be said, however, that after an unprejudiced study of Spinoza one finds it difficult to resist the conclusion that his philosophy is clearly tinged with a mystical element. There is a spiritual glow in his teachings, that cannot be denied. His "substance" has infinite attributes, although only two of them can come under human apprehension. His inner vision was, therefore, wider than the external, or, as Professor Wolf puts it, "he felt more than he saw". The fact that he was out and out of a rationalistic and scientific temperament need not hamper the above conclusion. Rather, it would make it more convincing that that mystical element about Spinoza was of a *higher* type. His religious language which was the outcome of this mystic feeling and the charm of his personality further prove that his intellectual love of God means something more than mere intellectual contemplation of a moral man. "His moral ardour seems almost aglow with this mystic fire."†

Discrimination is made between the good and the pleasant, as in the *Swetaswatara-Upanishad*, it is said that—

> The good and the pleasant approach a man, and the wise man discriminates between them choosing the better, not the more pleasant, the fool chooses the more pleasant.

The good is recognised to be more permanent and helps man to attain his aim. The Upanishadic ethics teach us to avoid all extremes. The *Taittiriya-Upanishad* advises that, when in doubt, man is to take as his authoritative model what is done in similar circumstances by wise men "who are competent to judge, who are apt and devoted *but not harsh lovers of virtue*".

All emotional excess is deprecated by the Upanishads. Philosophical serenity can be said to be the main object of Upanishadic Ethics. The ideal, however, is yet completely ethical. To quote Hopkins :—

> It is one that discountenances as inimical to the soul's welfare, cowardice,

* p. xcix. A. Wolf.—*Spinoza, His Life and Treatise on God and Man.*

† p. cii. *Ibid.*

sloth, wrath, jealousy, cruelty, meanness, pride, envy, lust, etc.*

That which increases the "vitality" of the whole being—not of one part at the expense of the rest—is good according to Spinoza. What an amount of stress is laid on reason and understanding in the realisation of ethical life is evident from the following metaphorical description of mind and the senses. A similar metaphor occurs in Plato.† The *Katha-Upanishad* says:—

> Know the Self or *Atman* as the Lord who sits in the chariot called the body. Buddhi or intelligence is the charioteer, mind is the reins, the senses are the horses, and the objects are the roads. The Self, the Senses and the Mind combined, the intelligent call the enjoyer. But he who has no understanding, but is weak in mind, his senses run riot like the vicious horses of a charioteer. He who has understanding and is strong-minded, his senses are well controlled, like the good horses of a charioteer. He who is without understanding, who is thoughtless and impure, never reaches the immortal state. But he who has understanding and he who is thoughtful and pure reaches the state from which there is no return.‡

Spinoza has no admiration of asceticism.§ He holds that there cannot be anything in the nature of man's interest, which is anti-social. Man's "conatus" is the ground of his virtue. It is his "self-assertion" that constitutes virtue.

It is the spirit of disinterestedness that is conveyed by *Tapas* and *Tyaga*. "By renunciation, thou shouldst enjoy"—says the *Isa-Upanishad*. This spirit of renunciation did not degenerate, in the Upanishads, into the insane asceticism of a later day, which revelled in the burning of bodies and such other practices. The *Mundaka-Upanishad* enters a strong protest against asceticism.

The Upanishads require us to work disinterestedly. When once we have the right vision, we may have wealth (*Taittiriya*). And Sankara points out that wealth is an evil to the unregenerate, but not to the man of wisdom. There is no indication in the Upanishads that we must give up life, mind, consciousness, intelligence, etc. On the other hand, the doctrine of divine immanence leads to an opposite conclusion. The false asceticism which regards life as a dream and the world as an illusion,—which has obsessed some thinkers in India as well as in Europe,—is foreign to the prevailing tone of the Upanishads. A healthy joy of the ethical life in the world pervades the atmosphere. The *Isa-Upanishad* says: "Only performing works one should desire to live a hundred years." The call is not to forsake the world; but it is only to give up the dream of separate reality.

M. S. MODAK

* Translation quoted from Radhakrishnan's *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 8.
† *Phædrus*.
‡ Vide p. 76 *Ethics of India*, Hopkins.
§ Vide p. 87 *Spinoza*, Duff.

WORLD-LEADERSHIP IN A SCIENTIFIC AGE

[**R. G. Collin Smith** is only in the middle twenties, but he has managed to do a good many things during a short time. He was at the London School of Economics, and has travelled among and studied the peasants of most of the European countries. For two years he worked as assistant editor to the *Toc H. Journal*, and as a writer he has to his credit a travel book and several articles and short stories. In this article he foreshadows a *rapprochement* between physical science and spiritual science.—EDS.]

The heaith and strength of a society may be judged by the degree in which its acclaimed leaders are also truly great men. To-day those nominally in charge of world-government are men of small philosophic and spiritual stature. The great are available, but they are neither acknowledged leaders, nor is material control in their hands. For the first reason the world presents a scene of anarchic confusion; for the second, it holds the highest potentialities.

At all periods great men appear. Like others, they must manifest their philosophic and spiritual gifts in one or other profession. With changing conditions, the professions which provide the greatest scope for their genius vary widely.

In the earliest past, the only position which obtained the ear of the people was that of tribal prophet-king, combining material and religious leadership. Later, men settled in fertile lands and great cities, building up stable and prosperous civilisations. To the great men were opened new professions—kingship, warriorship, statesmanship, priestcraft. In the course of time, the ethical and religious sense of the masses became more developed, and could be appealed to directly. With the coming of Christian teaching into the Western world, many great spirits undertook leadership in the Church, and in the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era, this constitutes perhaps their most important opening.

Before the year 1500 A. D., therefore, a very large proportion of the great of each age were men of action—kings, generals, statesmen, missionaries, administrative priests. They were the direct, and often the political, leaders of the people and, as such, were usually recognised and respected.

Meanwhile, the theories of individuality and democracy were gaining ground, and men no longer acknowledged or submitted to the great ones to the same extent. The great no longer controlled material power, nor put their ideas into practice by law-giving and administration, since the people was of an age to experiment by itself with the reins of government. The invention of printing introduced a period of conscious mental influence unsupported by force—a tremendous advance for individual

responsibility. The great ceased to rule and were content to influence.

In the twentieth century, the exaggeration of this lack of balance between culture and action produces the conditions which we have stated. Thanks to the good influences of individual men—authors, philosophers, doctors, artists, scientists—each with his many followers, the world to-day is full of intellectual power and spiritual aspiration of the highest kind. At the same time, its government and economic control, being almost entirely in the hands of men of small vision, have either become dominated by purely material standards, or have collapsed into complete unreason.

Hence the anomaly of a world in part passionately struggling towards light, in part surrendered to complete materialism, the whole saddled with unprecedented material chaos and moral confusion.

Men must yield themselves to their real leaders, it is true, but now in knowledge and no longer in ignorance. To become like the old peasants, and renounce the gift of responsibility, is to go backward. Men must use their responsibility to choose out consciously the great men to lead them. And that is a question of their daily values.

I believe that there are signs of such a new regime to-day, and that it is to be sought in the *rapprochement* of physical and spiritual science, and in a resulting race of accepted world leaders who shall be scientists in both senses.

It is physical science which, since about 1750, has given the world the powers over nature upon which twentieth century civilisation is based. The statesman, the financier, the merchant, are merely administrative officials using the inventions and discoveries of the scientist.

Now the old scientist was churchman first, and scientist after. But by the second half of the nineteenth century, the mechanical approach to the macrocosm and the microcosm led researchers to believe that all life was ultimately explicable in terms of balls and wheels and weights. At that same period, the Church had fallen into a rigidly dogmatic and unimaginative interpretation of its message, which made ecclesiastical sentiment seem wholly irreconcilable with the clockwork universe of the physicists.

Since that time, both physical and spiritual science have been modified and developed greatly. The opening up of Eastern Wisdom, and its reinterpretation with an infusion of Western vitality; an intelligent study of comparative religion; the popular growth of such movements as theosophy; unprecedented intellectual freedom and a tremendous individual search for truth—these things have produced a wider and more universal spiritual science, which has come to influence the thought of our whole civilisation.

Science, meanwhile, has broad-

ened as much. Passing from the mechanistic thesis, it entered, with investigations of universal wave motion, into a wholly mathematical realm, and is now pausing, on the further confines of that conception, before still inexplicable mysteries beyond. It seems that both mechanics and mathematics will fail in the last analysis to provide a life-principle for the universe. What then is to be expected from scientific research in the near future?

Here we gather a clue from the writings of the great physical scientists of the day, where the broader physical science and the broader spiritual science have come into unexpected contact. Lord Morley said, in the hey-day of a science flushed with youthful pride: "The next great task of Science is to create a religion for humanity." The scientists of today are not so arrogant. It is no longer the creation of a religion which is in question, but the gradual unveiling of a larger truth which will reconcile all the fragments which religion and science have separately discovered. The Universe is too planned and perfect to be regarded any longer as "a fortuitous concourse of atoms".

Sir James Jeans, for example, almost against his will, finds himself moving towards the idea of a Universal Mind, and voluntarily aligns himself with the mystic, Berkeley.

Julian Huxley, too, after a minute examination and criticism of superficial religious thought, defines God as "the sum of the forces acting in the cosmos, as perceived and grasped by the human mind". If he had had the courage to leave out the qualification, he would have agreed wholly with spiritual science as revealed in all the great books of religion. He concludes an essay on the subject with a sudden flash of truth that illuminates the outlook and hope of the future:—

> The moulding of matter by spirit is, under one aspect, Science; under another, Art; under still another, Religion. Let us be careful not to allow the moulding forces to counteract each other when they might be made to co-operate.*

J. B. S. Haldane approaches the problem from another angle. He denies the possibility of supernatural manifestations, but then goes on to postulate the illimitable extension of that which is to be regarded as natural. He thus throws open the scientific mind to the acceptance of superphysical planes, and admits that physical science as such is concerned only with the external manifestation of principles which go much deeper. He explains in one place:—

> The argument of these lectures is that the physical world is not the real world, but only an ideal and quite insufficient representation of it. The real world is the spiritual world of values, and these values are in ultimate analysis nothing but the manifestation of the Supreme Spiritual Reality, called, in the language of religion, God.†

This, using the terms *Maya*,

* *Essays of a Biologist*, Julian Huxley, p. 304.

† *The Sciences and Philosophy*, J. B. S. Haldane, p. 297.

Buddhi, and *Brahman*, is the most orthodox Hinduism.

It is clear from these quotations that the most advanced school of physical science has accepted a spiritual explanation of the universe. It has reached extremely pure spiritual conceptions, based upon direct observation and unhampered by ritual and dogma. These conceptions (though undeveloped in detail) accord with the Occult teaching of all ages.

The characteristic of our age, as we have seen, is progress in physical science. Our particular approach to truth probably lies along the lines of intellectual and scientific conception as opposed to the religious approach of the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era. Our scientists, upon whose work the physical and economic ordering of our civilisation depends, are clearly making rapid progress along the former path.

With this in mind, let us return to our original problem of leaders for the present world-order. In ten or twenty years, it seems safe to say, the progress of scientific thought from the physical side, will have reached fairly complete understanding of the spiritual and esoteric principles of which the physical world is a manifestation. To-day, there is more *detailed* knowledge of physical science than ever before though in many ancient civilisations the principles have been better known and generally applied. In a short time it seems likely that such detailed knowledge will be linked up with these principles, knowledge of which has been largely lost. When that occurs spiritual science (as expressed in the esoteric side of all religions, in mystic philosophy, in theosophy) will be united with physical science (as expressed in the mechanical, astronomical and biological knowledge which rules the external world to-day).

From such a union, a new school of scientists will grow, having detailed knowledge of the working of our material and economic world, and at the same time the spiritual development essential to all great men. With such qualifications, they might well become the acclaimed leaders of the people also, and it is easy to imagine a world, no longer administered by statesmen and politicians, but by such as these. "If a ruler or a king could hold the Tao," said Lao Tse, "all things would of their own accord assume the desired shape." That condition would once more be possible to a weary world, and a mechanically minded age could return to contact with the spirit.

R. G. COLLIN SMITH

RELIGION A HELP AND A HINDRANCE

[**Alban G. Widgery** was once the Editor of *The Indian Philosophical Review*: also, he was the Stanton Lecturer in Philosophy of Religion at Cambridge University; at present he is the Professor of Philosophy at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, U. S. A.—EDS.]

Devotees of religion are strongly convinced of its aid in the art of satisfactory living; opponents have emphatically urged on the contrary that it is a hindrance. There is truth on both sides of this opposition. An attempt to analyse the situation with which we are here faced may suggest the principle of advance by which both sides may gain, and indeed eventually the opposition be overcome. A fundamental essential for any such advantage to accrue is that those on both sides shall be sincerely anxious to find the truth and be willing to conform their attitudes with it.

In what is religion an aid to life? An exhaustive answer to that question would include a number of specific ways in which individual religions through their individual practices and their support of ethical convictions help to mould the conduct and influence the thoughts and feelings of their adherents. No such detailed consideration can be given in the little space available here: nevertheless these specific aids constitute a large part of the religious life of the member of any religion. As striking examples may be mentioned the Muslim practices of prayer, Buddhist forms of meditation, Christian hymn-singing, and Jain self-examination. Here something more general and profound which lies at the heart of all genuine religion needs to be brought into view. Ultimately, the aid which religion seriously gives in life is the feeling, the conviction, of the relation of the good in one's emotions and efforts with a reality wider and more fundamental than the individual feels himself at any moment to be, something transcending the social group of which he is a member whether church, nation, or humanity; something which has characteristics different from those of external nature. Different religions and diverse sects of religions have expressed the implications of this in different, and sometimes in apparently contradictory ways. Many oriental forms of expression represent this wider, deeper reality as not something other than one's self, but as its own truer and complete reality. *Jivatman*, individual soul, is in its essence fundamentally one with *paramatman* or the universal soul. Other, especially occidental, forms of expression have described the wider transcendent reality as a deity. But whatever the form of the expressions, the experience is essentially this, that in religion, by realising contact and harmony with this infinite self, or this deity, life receives a sense of confidence,

a courage in face of difficulties and sufferings, a peace and an ability to overcome superficial discontent. Religious ritual, whether public or private, tends to cultivate this attitude of mind.

In what is religion a hindrance to life? Here, again, a complete answer would involve a consideration of particular ways in which individual religions and different sects present obstacles to full and harmonious experience. These may, however, all be brought in one way or another under certain general statements, which alone are possible in this treatment. In the first place, these hindrances are all due to forms of theoretical or practical dogmatism. It is this that constitutes the main ground of those conflicts of religious groups which have sundered mankind into opposing factions, and been a hindrance to their co-operative activity for the greater production and the wider distribution of the physical and cultural goods of human existence. The different groups have each maintained that their form of theoretical creed is true, and those of the others false, and with open hostility or veiled friendship have fought one against the other. Similarly with regard to ritualistic practices and allied ethics; each has tended in some measure to condemn those of the other. The maintenance of attitudes of rigid conformity to the ideas and maxims of traditional forms of particular religions often tends to the persistence of moral practices of a lower order than those towards which mankind in general may be striving. Consequently, religions are frequently opposed not so much with regard to their fundamentally religious implications but because they are associated with an ethic of a bygone age and condition of society. In the second place actually the adherence to one set of beliefs and practices has led to so great a formalism that the individual person and the particular community have become shut up, as it were, within a narrow circle of ideas, activities, and sympathies. The broadening and deepening of life is thus seriously hindered. This leads to the third type of hindrance. The attitude is cultivated in religious communities that not merely some truth of religion is apprehended by their particular sects or religions, but all truth: consequently, advance both of religion and of life in innumerable aspects is checked.

With that one may perhaps be led to a consideration of how the opposition with which we began is to be overcome. The hindrances are to be eradicated only by a fuller and more profound understanding of the character of religion as an actual aid. None, except perhaps those orientals who have claimed, or had the claim made for them, that they have completely attained *moksha* or *nirvana*, would contend that their experiences of their relation with the wider whole are at any time perfect. Attainment is a matter rather of gradual advance, and it is such

advance in the individual and the community which constitutes spiritual history. The whole in contact with which the mind is to be in harmony is seen not to exclude but to include all that is worth while in empirical existence; in contact with it one is to be able to find an increasing richness in life in every possible way, in the understanding and enjoyment of nature, in the cultivation and appreciation of the arts, in the expansion of social friendship and love. Once this is realised, and salvation is understood as a process in which we are involved, without present complete attainment, the essential hindrances will be in course removed. It will come to be seen in most instances that the divisions and conflicts caused through theoretical and practical dogmatisms are due mostly not to what is asserted but to what is denied. What one religionist urges of his religion may be true: what he says is wrong in another may not be wrong. Both may have grasped essential aspects of the whole: both are impoverished in excluding what the other has discovered. The proper appreciation of the character of religion as a help should lead to a notion of unity, to be arrived at not by reduction of all to the common measure of their similarities, but through a harmony built up out of the widest contributions. From this standpoint the religious motive should be a driving force for the cultivation of the good in all its forms whether that of truth, beauty, moral character, or religious peace and ecstasy. The basal character of the experience of religion as an aid to life is thus at one and the same time the source for a progressive movement in an ever-enriching historical life of mankind and it reveals the character of its ultimate goal. In this process the fundamental essence of religion is itself able to overcome all hindrances which partial and incorrect representations of religion may have generated.

ALBAN G. WIDGERY

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

TWO ENGLISH ALCHEMISTS

GEORGE RIPLEY AND THOMAS NORTON*

[**E. J. Holmyard's** writings on alchemical subjects are authentic and valuable. In this article besides matters of alchemical interest is the story of teacher and pupil which has its own moral for students of esoteric philosophy.—EDS.]

The art of alchemy, brought to a high level of philosophical theory and technical proficiency by the medieval Arabs, was transmitted bodily to Western Europe during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. There it met with its customary fortune and misfortune: fortune in engaging the attention of profound and brilliant thinkers such as Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus, and misfortune in attracting a horde of unscrupulous charlatans eager to enrich themselves by false pretensions to the magistery. These rogues quickly became so numerous that Chaucer, in the second half of the fourteenth century, felt it necessary to administer a severe castigation of the very real abuse; though a careful reading of the *Tale of the Chanoun's Yeoman* seems to show that he had no scepticism of the genuine Art, and may probably himself have been an adept.

It is difficult to gauge the effect of Chaucer's bitter satire, but there can be no doubt that the century succeeding his death witnessed the zenith of alchemy in this country. Chief among the English initiates was George Ripley (*circa* 1415-1490), a native of Yorkshire (or perhaps Surrey), who became a canon-regular of St. Augustine at Bridlington and there pursued the study of alchemy with such experimental vigour that he is said to have caused no small discomfort to the other members of the fraternity. Dissatisfied with his progress, he travelled widely in France, Germany and Italy in search of fuller information, and had the good luck to witness a transmutation at Rome. This event determined him to settle in Rome for a considerable time, and there in 1477 his friendship with Pope Innocent VIII culminated in his elevation to the rank of chamberlain. In the following year, having acquired a complete mastery of the Divine Art, he returned to Bridlington; but he found the conditions irksome and unfavourable, and the Pope granted him an indulgence to live in retirement, exempt from cloistral observances, in the Carmelite monastery of St. Botolph at Boston (Lincs.).

* *Enquiry into the Authorship of the Ordinall of Alchimy* by M. Nierenstein and P. F. Chapman. Isis XVIII, 290-321 (1931); *A Facsimile of Ashmole's edition of the Ordinall*, with an introduction by E. J. Holmyard. (Edwin Arnold and Co., London, 1928.)

According to tradition, Ripley's skill at transmutation was such that he was able to provide vast sums of money for the defence of Rhodes by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. However this may be, it is at least certain that his two books, *The Compound of Alchemy* and *The Bosome Book*, established his reputation as the greatest adept of his age, and inspired a young man of Bristol with a burning desire to sit at his feet.

This young man, whose reputation was to eclipse even that of his master, was named Thomas Norton. Until the last few months, very little was known of Norton's life beyond the traditional facts that he belonged to a substantial Bristol family, and that he was the grandfather of another alchemist, Samuel Norton (1548–1604?)—a less shadowy figure who became Sheriff of Somerset, muster-master of Somerset and Wiltshire, and rector of Abbot's Leigh, a village on the outskirts of Bristol. Recently, however, an investigation of the records of the Bristol Nortons has been made, and though complete certainty has not been attained, it seems likely that Ripley's disciple was Thomas Norton, Customer of Bristol and a gentleman of the household of King Edward IV, whose will was dated 26th November 1513 and who probably died shortly afterwards.

From the scanty records still remaining, Thomas Norton's character does not emerge to his advantage. In 1458 his father, Walter Norton, applied to the Courts for the transfer of his property to his younger son, "in order that he should not be vexed or troubled by Thomas, his elder brother"; while at his death six years later he left Thomas no more handsome a bequest than "a silver cup, some hangings and cushions in the hall of his dwelling, and the standing bed in the great chamber with its tester and curtains". Thomas, indeed, appears to have been a thoroughly disreputable and quarrelsome person. In 1477 he was in trouble over irregularities in his customs accounts, but was pardoned by the king. Shortly afterwards, he accused the Mayor of Bristol of high treason, but apparently the accusation was not taken seriously from one who was described as "a common haunter of taverns, where he drinks and rails with his followers till midnight, not associating with honest company; lies in bed till nine or ten daily, avoiding divine service; spends sermon time in the afternoon at tennis and frivolous sports, and generally promotes mischief". It proved, in fact, that the incident with the Mayor was merely an act of revenge for having been discovered as the retainer of thieves who assaulted one of the Bailiffs of the city and left him for dead.

Thomas added to his other misdemeanours a vicious persecution of his younger brother, whom he deprived of the family estate, imprisoned, and finally drove out of

the country to Spain, on the voyage to which he was drowned.

Such facts have led to a doubt whether the celebrated *Ordinall of Alchimy*, the classical alchemical work of fifteenth-century England, can justifiably be assigned to its reputed author, "Thomas Norton of Bristol". It is, however, no uncommon thing to find a literary masterpiece falling from the pen of a profligate, and in this particular instance we may imagine without difficulty that the art of alchemy had much to attract a man who obviously spent money as fast as he could acquire it. According to his own account, he began to study alchemy at an early age, and, fired by enthusiasm for his subject, rode the length of the land to receive instruction from the lips of Ripley himself. After studying with the Master for forty days, he returned to Bristol and succeeded in arriving at a knowledge of the great Elixir when he was twenty-eight years old.

His first specimen, prepared after much labour, was stolen from him by a dishonest servant: a misfortune which so discouraged him that, for a time, he would have "noe more of Alkimy". However, he recovered his optimism before long, and prepared the Elixir a second time—only to find that ill luck still dogged his footsteps, for "a merchant's wife" robbed him of the precious substance as soon as it was made. A third attempt meeting with a similar fate, Norton relinquished his experiments, to his "greate paine and much more woe," but resolved to commit to paper the knowledge so fully, if so laboriously, acquired.

His chief work is the *Ordinall of Alchimy*, which exists in manuscript and has also been published by Elias Ashmole in the *Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum* (1652). Latin versions were published by Michael Maier in his *Tripus Aureus* and by Manget in his *Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa* (1702). The authorship of the *Ordinall*, which is written in English verse, is revealed in a curious way. "From the first word of the Proeme," says Ashmole, "and the initiall letters of the six following chapters—we may collect the author's Name and place of Residence: For those letters, (together with the first line of the seventh chapter) speak thus:

Tomais Norton of Briseto,
A parfet Master ye maie him call trowe."

The poem opens with the "proheme," in which Norton explains his reason for writing the book, and laments the foolishness of both "clerks and laymen," in attempting to follow the enigmas and dark sayings of his predecessors. Even

. . .Common workemen will not be out-laste,
For as well as Lords they love this noble crafte;
As Gouldesmithes whom we shulde lest reprove
For sights in their craft moveth them to beleeve:
But wonder it is that Wevers deale with such warks,
Free Masons and Tanners with poore Parish Clerks;
Tailors and Glasiers will not thereof cease,
And eke sely Tinkers will put them in the prease
With greate presumption.

As masters of the Art, Norton mentions Hermes, Rhazes, Geber, Avicenna, Merlin, Hortolanus, Democritus, Morienus, Bacon, Lully, Isaac (Judaeus) and others, but complains that, to use his own delightful expression, "their cloudy Clauses dulled many men". His advice to the novice is not to trust these men and their books, but to "give Credence to this booke and mee," and "to lerne well this Clause, Nothing is wrought but by his proper Cause". He was not devoid of the scientific spirit, and remarks that—

With due proofe and with discreet assaye,
Wise men may learne new things every day,

but his general system of thought is often confused and illogical. In spite, however, of various shortcomings as a practical treatise, the *Ordinall* is more than a mere sprightly and attractive alchemical poem: for the attentive reader will soon discover that Norton's acquaintance with esoteric doctrine, though by no means complete, is considerable enough to be of great value to those who have sufficiently advanced to read between the lines.

E. J. HOLMYARD

A NOVELIST WITH A MESSAGE

[**Geoffrey West** is a biographer and a critic, possessing insight and idealism, and in the following article he offers some valuable thoughts which need to be more thoroughly discussed. For example—novelists as teachers and priests; or the relation between religion, art and spirituality. Accepted definitions are traps; different people have different concepts, when they discuss about art or religion or teachers; there is need to clear the ground by adopting definite names for definite things.—EDS.]

Claude Houghton is one of the most significant of the younger English novelists writing to-day. In a special sense, he presents a type of novelist the world of the West *needs* to-day. His books are an innovation at least in contemporary English fiction. The modern novel, it is often said, stands at a crisis of life or death. For half a century or more it has been progressively dominated by a materialistic realism finally deepening to an unqualified naturalism, a transcription of experience devoid of beauty, value, or meaning. The cold disgust of an Aldous Huxley facing a world without spiritual colour, the horrified and horrifying engrossment of a William Faulkner in morbid psychologies as inescapably determining existence—these are its logical conclusions. They are, of course, in large degree little more than reflection or echo of the general trend of Western thought and feeling. The novelist and the novel are to-day in Europe and America the most sensitive and faithful record of prevailing mental states. Who would understand these lands should read their novels! In the phrases of

Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn, as the sacred scriptures have been secularised to the status of literature, so literature, "the fullest and most continuous expression of the totality of man's life," has acquired something of the rank of scripture. Literature in general, the novel in particular, in denying, in freeing itself from, the moralistic domination of dogmatic religion, but followed the centuries-long movement of Western thought towards a vital emancipation. It was a necessary movement, it had to be made, so long as Christianity clung—and it still clings—to the letter of its teaching as its unchangeable essence. But there is danger, worse than danger, that the good has been thrown away with the bad, the gold with the dross, the very taproots of spiritual life severed in the endeavour to save them from being strangled. Reacting against the false claims of religions, we are apt to deny religion altogether.

That surely is in no small degree the situation to-day of Europe, of America, of all the world West and East (including Russia) that accepts the so-called Western civilization. Without vision the people perish, and for lack of vision, a sense of spiritual values as *real*, the world is falling into chaos, into conflict and self-destruction. What can save it? Where lies the hope or even possibility of spiritual re-awakening? The Churches cry in vain to the people while still clinging to their creeds as ultimate truth; the day of such dogmatic religion is over. Men demand a wider, a more universal truth. But what, and whence? Who shall be their, our, teachers? If spiritual renaissance there is to be, is it absurd that some of us should look to our writers, even our novelists, for inspiration? Certain it is that the West must have its own prophets, to cast their rarer knowledge into familiar forms. Men must be made to meet the truth on, as it were, their own doorsteps. A generation, an age, sunk in materialism, cannot, if it would, suddenly fling away the body of this flesh for a life in the spirit. Being what it is, it must be made to know the spirit in the flesh. Its teachers must be not priests withdrawn from experience, denying the flesh, but those whose knowledge is deeper as well as higher, who can show us the flame of the spirit burning within the bowl of the body with a power and verity not all our wilful blindness can deny. It is our artists, our novelists, most sensitively attuned to the needs and longings of the soul and body of mankind, who must be our teachers, our priests, to-day. Perhaps too few accept, or even discern, the responsibility, but only those who fulfil it, however unconsciously, are truly significant.

Houghton discerns, accepts, and—in his degree—fulfils. He has vision, and declares it, at least in his novels, in terms native to the West. He believes, absolutely, in the need for a new religion, a revival of and through

spiritual values. The only possible alternative seems to him the collapse of civilisation into deeper and deeper chaos. The phrase, "a new religion," is his own, but his writings in general, and in particular his exposition of his belief, *The Kingdoms of the Spirit*, make it quite clear that he has in mind a freshness of rediscovery rather than of innovation. For in *The Kingdoms of the Spirit* he consciously recognises his faith as the oldest religion in the world—or, perhaps one should say, as the unchanging basis of all religions. He believes, he says, in the final spiritual nature of being. He sees each man's life, if only potentially, as a pilgrimage from the limiting slavery of self to the infinite freedom of total spiritual awareness. He holds "that each individual life is one link in an eternal sequence, that its importance is not restricted within the limit of physical duration, that the measure of its significance is related to eternity and not to time." These three affirmations he declares to be "common to all comprehensive creeds," but beyond that asserts no dogmas, regarding such as no more than the expression of eternal realities in temporal terms conditioned by the degree of spiritual growth, and by the physical environment, of their worshippers. He quotes Lao-Tzu: "The Tao which can be expressed in words is not the eternal Tao; the name which can be uttered is not its eternal name." Every man, he would say, must seek his own truth in his own way.

> There are [reflects a character in *Crisis*] as many truths as there are persons on the earth. A vision of absolute truth is not obtainable in this world, where all things are relative. But if each individual would seek the truth that belonged to him or her, valuing it above all things, and seeking to serve it when found, then, and then only, life would cease to be a series of tricks, evasions, and facile observances. It would attain its true stature and become reality. And if the truth that one man discovers is not identical with that of another, nevertheless there will be a vital relation between these truths, for each will be a reflection of that ultimate Truth from which every truth proceeds. Each of us casts a different shadow, yet there is only one sun.

Here is the root of a wisdom the world needs to-day as never before, and one moreover that men *will* accept, for the whole trend of modern thinking predisposes them to it in the degree that it can be made real to them in the terms of their daily lives.

This is the achievement that Houghton's novels not merely point to but verge upon. He is in fact the author of two volumes of poems, two plays in verse, *The Kingdoms of the Spirit*, and seven novels (written in that order). To the poems and plays I do no more than call attention; they contain some fine if rhetorical writing, and the plays in particular, *Judas* and *In the House of the High Priest*, high imaginative elements; they reveal also the development of that illumination of which *The Kingdoms of the Spirit* is the explicit record, a record notable for and convincing in the freshness and vitality of its

statetment of ancient truths. It is a book containing much more than has been indicated, describing as it does the spiritual kingdoms of self, belief, vision, law, imagination, love and the rest, which are the pilgrim's stepping-stones to the veritable Kingdom of God.

> We rise from self to sainthood: through the discipline of law we rise from the slavery of self to the freedom of love, and consequently we pass from illusion to illusion until we obtain a glimpse of the shadow of Truth itself.

If in one sense it says nothing that is new, it bears upon every page the authentic signature of genuine individual experience; Houghton has made these truths his own, even if he is but one among a million—or million million—wayfarers!

Always, even in his novels, he is concerned with that Truth which is eternal. Yet in another sense his novels are so absolutely contemporary that they might almost be described as topical. They dissect and crystallise in dramatic form the deepening distress year by year of the Western world. Merely for their social criticism they deserve to be read. Even in an isolated couple of sentences from his latest novel, *Julian Grant Loses His Way* there is a profound truth, declared with a brilliant succinctness :—

> If you're not hypnotised by a pseudo-technical jargon, you'll discover that our famous economic problems are created by one fact. The age of expansion is ended, and so there's no longer any loot. We're gangsters without victims.

In *Crisis, I Am Jonathan Scrivener*, *Chaos is Come Again*, and *Julian Grant*, at least, such criticism is implicit and explicit. It is integral to them all. And necessarily. For they—all seven—are essentially dramatisations, from varied angles, of the essential realisation of *The Kingdoms of the Spirit*. They are stories of men and women to whom the world becomes meaningless save as they can "discover the features of the Eternal beneath the masks and deceptions of Time". And that seems to him precisely the world's case. Losing its sense of the spiritual, it *has* become chaos, babel. Of his novels as a whole, it might be said that they show a society in disintegration, with promise of new life, of constructive order, residing only in those who have made discovery of values higher and more vital than a materialist despair or selfishness. Such discovery is never presented as easy. A man must pass through Gethsemane to attain crisis and illumination. (How much more then a world!)

In some respects *Neighbours*, the first of his novels, is the type of them all. It is the story of a man living alone in an attic who listens through the wall to the conversations of a young man, Victor, with his friends. More and more Victor's personality and words obsess him, emptying his own life of value and meaning yet giving him nothing of the other's secret knowledge and strength. At last he breaks in upon Victor to kill him, only to realise that he himself is Victor, that all he has heard has been but his own in-

terior drama of progress towards spiritual understanding. The later *I Am Jonathan Scrivener* is a richer and stronger book, but its theme is essentially the same—the narrator's discovery of himself in others, his realisation of the illusion of appearances, of the nature of truth as vested only in the eternal. In *Chaos is Come Again* the reference to the exterior world is much more direct; in the family of the eccentric Petersleys are symbolised the mental outlooks dominant in the Western world to-day, and with an extraordinary, a haunting, success, but attention centres less upon Adrian, the reborn man, than, in their books, upon Victor and Scrivener. *Julian Grant Loses His Way* might be said to show, in the epitome of a single man's life, how the Western world has lost its way, taking like Julian, the path of pure intellect to emotional death, setting logic, curiosity, greed of experience above love and pity, a blinding pride before a true spiritual humility. It is perhaps Houghton's most ambitious piece of work, and certainly remarkable if not entirely successful.

These are the outstanding novels. The other three, *The Riddle of Helena*, *Crisis*, and *A Hair Divides*, are books of merit and insight, often of a flashing, dazzling, iridescent beauty, but they are, I think, definitely slighter in content and interest. Yet nothing that Houghton writes lacks a high degree of vision, vividness, brilliance, wit, dexterity.

Quite recently that discriminating critic, the editor of the London *Bookman*, referred to Houghton as "one of the very few novelists from whom a great book can confidently be expected". This is praise indeed! For myself, I cannot deny him the potentialities of greatness, though I think he has yet to realise them. He has the range but lacks something of stability; he sways at times precariously between profundity and triviality. While in all his books the metaphysical element is very real, there is a certain failure to embody his vision *fully* in the terms of this world of time. He tends to give us characters in the flat rather than the round, in the spirit more than the flesh, so that they lack that final inescapable reality which must compel belief in the truths of which they are the vehicles. The novelist for whom we wait, it has been suggested above, is he who can descend into and evoke the full presence of the flesh with a Tolstoyan vigour, to inform *that* with the irresistible conviction of spirit-presence. It is another aspect of the same failure that makes so many of his books end where they should really begin. What, we ask, followed the realisation of the narrator of *Neighbours* that he was Victor, the instant when he achieved illumination and "a certainty deeper than the foundations of the world"? Of Scrivener we have a complete analysis; the instant the man himself appears, the book precipitately ends.

If Houghton would but show us a Scrivener in the flesh, a Julian Grant who did not lose his way, then indeed we might have something to challenge Dostoevsky's embodiment of "the new man" in Alyosha Karamazov. For that we look to him. If he cannot, then another must, if the novel —literature—is to sustain its prophetic function.

GEOFFREY WEST

RED PHILOSOPHY AND RED POLITICS

[Here are two criticisms by thoughtful and earnest men who desire betterment of the human race; they have a different outlook and yet they are one in pointing out the most unspiritual and therefore the most dangerous aspect of the great experiment in Russia.

Mr. Hugh de Selincourt says :—

The pity is that the Communist Ideal is the highest ideal possible to man, and just so far as a high ideal is enforced is the enforcement mischievous.

Mr. C. Delisle Burns says :—

The Communist Party is now following exactly the same authoritarian, highly centralised policy as the Roman Church followed in the European Middle Ages. Local differences are allowed so long as the Faith is the same in all localities.

Will Russia succeed and establish a civilization of Robots? Or will the human will rebound because of outer control and assert its own divine freedom?—EDS.]

I*

This book is rather disappointing. The dialogue form is not easy to handle, though it is easy to make seductive: the American group—the Humanist, the Banker, the Rotarian, the Leader, the Reformer and the Professor,—are not worthy opponents for Sokrator, the Communist advocate; from the moment of his entry upon the scene—"Enter an unpretentious-looking man of about fifty, whose simple white Russian blouse and black leather belt distinguish him from the elegantly-dressed tourists" —they appear like schoolboys with a kindly superior, never for a moment as human beings of equal right to existence and opinion, who have met to discuss a burning question with another. One experiences the odd and exasperating sensation that many have experienced in speaking with a convert, who at one moment appears as a martyr, willing to die at the stake for his faith, and at another as a generous soul full of pity for any who are outside his pale. This is a very great pity, as every thinking man must have enormous sympathy with the effort being made in Russia to found a happier way of life than that which we have inherited from the long crime of the war.

In talking with the average communist it is difficult to get beyond abuse; the atmosphere is heated as at a political meeting: in which the words *bourgeois* and *capitalist* are flung at one's head like missiles, and *toiling masses* are extolled. These rough and ready generalisations are effective at a political meeting; but when one quietly looks at the infinite variations of human activity they very soon cease to be satisfactory: and the difficulty is rendered more confusing by the fact that though the

* *Moscow Dialogues: Discussions on Red Philosophy.* By JULIUS F. HECKER, London. (Chapman & Hall, Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*).

speaker himself claims to represent the toiling masses he rarely, if ever, himself toils. Class warfare is proclaimed. You must don a black shirt or a red shirt. If a black shirt, Jews are boycotted, socialists beaten and chivied out of the country: if a red shirt, the bourgeois and the capitalist are eliminated: and any one who cannot squeeze into the ranks of the Communist Party and remain there. It is a depressing outlook for the average citizen who wants order and a quiet life. Force breeds force, hatred hatred.

One hoped that in a book of this kind fundamental questions would be touched, which must trouble the heart of every honest man. First and foremost the question how far a person can remain a member of any political party and retain his own personal integrity. Which must take prior claim? What useful contribution can a man who is not whole-hearted make to any party? What gives life to a party if it is not the integrity of its members? Where does the gradual paring down of personal integrity for party purposes lead?

The truth is that the distinction drawn between Individualist and Socialist is entirely arbitrary and fit only for the shallowest platform oratory. One is inconceivable without the other, as Havelock Ellis shows with perfect clarity in the last chapter of his admirable book, *The Task of Social Hygiene*, in which the whole matter is thoroughly and profoundly discussed.

There is another point of vital importance which is not raised. Life is not possible without discipline: but discipline applied from without is injurious. This is a known fact, even with regard to the body. An officer in command of a regiment in an unhealthy district in India obtained a clean bill of health by waiving military regulations and allowing his men to perform physical exercises taking their own time, and not in unison, taking their time from an instructor. It is truer with regard to the mind. Educationists now realise that their job is not to fashion the growing child to a particular shape, however good, but to allow him to grow to his own shape. It is slowly and ever more widely recognised that *Don't* spoken to a child from an elder is really a confession of ignorance on the elder's part. What good results then is the iron discipline of a party likely to obtain? The pity is that the Communist Ideal is the highest ideal possible to man, and just so far as a high ideal is enforced is the enforcement mischievous.

Neither the Humanist nor the Reformer nor the Professor nor the Rotarian is permitted to raise any of these points in the discussion which is accordingly robbed of its vitality and degenerates into a kindly discourse and an easy scoring over the uninitiate. Such puppets are they that no objection is made to bringing in Spinoza as almost the founder of the philosophy of communism, known as dialectical materialism. This is an extraordinary omission. For no one has ever been clearer or simpler in showing how a man may become free. His whole philosophy is opposed to force of any kind. Spinoza wrote:—

> Minds are conquered not by arms but by love and magnanimity. It is above all things useful to men that they unite their habits of life and bind themselves together with such bonds by which they can most easily make one individual of them all and to do those things especially which serve for the purpose of confirming friendship. But for this skill and vigilance are required. For men are varied . . . and moreover they are generally envious and more prone to revenge than pity. It is a matter, therefore, of considerable force of mind to regard each one according to his disposition and to contain oneself and not imitate the emotions of others. But those who cavil at men and prefer rather to reprobate vices than to inculcate virtues, and who do not solidify but unloosen the minds of men—these, I say, are a nuisance both to themselves and to others.

HUGH DE SELINCOURT

II*

This is an interesting and valuable book. It deals with one of the most important aspects of the experiments in government now being made in Russia. Nationalism is now prominent in the whole world; and in most countries it is a force tending to destroy the political and economic structure which we have inherited from the nineteenth century. It was Nationalism which severed the Western part of the Tzar's Empire from the territories now ruled by the Soviet Government. Finland and the Baltic States and Poland came into existence at about the same time as the Bolshevik Party seized power in Russia. But the chief purpose of the Bolsheviks had nothing to do with Nationalism. They began with the Marxian assumption that national differences were negligible by comparison with the conflict of economic "classes". Now, however, as Mr. Kohn admirably shows, the Soviet Government has to reckon with the very great diversity of races, religions and forms of culture among the peoples whom it rules. There was a danger that the Russian Communists would inherit the "Pan-Russian Chauvinism" which had been the basis of Russian policy for generations, in the crushing of local cultures. The Soviet Government, however, has decided to develop differences of culture and to help undeveloped groups to discover their own separate traditions. Thus the Soviet Union is a federation of Republics which have different "nationalities". Mr. Kohn's book has valuable appendices showing the national composition of the U. S. S. R., and of the Communist Party. Fifty-three per cent of the whole population is Russian: and twenty-one per cent Ukrainian. But the other national groups are small. On the other hand, only 72 out of 10,000 of the Russians are Communists and 868 out of 10,000 among the Letts. The theory is that each population will have a right to its own language and culture, so far as this is in the hands of the local proletariat. And when there is no Communist proletariat, it will be developed by aid from Moscow. Moscow dictates the form of Nationalism allowed.

Mr. Kohn rightly shows how wise the policy of the Soviet Government is, in the existing circumstances. But his book is short; and there is no space for him to explain the relation of Soviet policy to other policies, which have been used in the past in Europe. The situation in Soviet Territory, except in Ukrainia and in the Western parts which have been affected by Europe, is as primitive as it was when the Roman Empire and later the Christian Church dominated Western Europe. Nationalism in our modern sense has not yet developed in Soviet Territory. The Communist Party is now following exactly the same authoritarian, highly centralised policy as the Roman Church followed in the European Middle Ages. Local differences are allowed so long as "the Faith" is the same in all localities. But policy and the line of local development is strictly controlled by the dominant group in the Communist Party in Moscow. There will probably be no trouble in combining an universal Faith with some small local developments of culture, until modern Nationalism troubles the serenity of the Faith. But at present there is so little danger from Nationalism within Soviet territories that the Soviet Government can afford to support the extremest forms of Nationalism outside its territory, as means of disturbing the control of foreign capital in any area. For most Russians, even before the Great War, capital was something foreign, and therefore objectionable on nationalistic grounds.

C. DELISLE BURNS

Nationalism in the Soviet Union. By Hans Kohn. (George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

Guide to Modern Thought. By C. E. M. JOAD. (Faber and Faber Ltd., London. 6*s.*)

This is what the French call an *œuvre de vulgarisation.* Its object is to state in simple and untechnical language the way science is going. Though it purports to be a guide to "modern thought," it is concerned only with biology, psychology and physics, these alone being considered relevant to the great problems of human life and destiny. Mr. Joad, a teacher by profession, has a quite exceptional gift of clear exposition, and uses it in this work to considerable advantage. There are indeed some obscurities; and one might feel that he ignores the views of such important writers as Professors Hogben and Levy; but he does on the whole give the lay reader an intelligible account of the theories now current as to the nature of life and the constitution of the universe. It is when he discusses their significance, how they are to be interpreted, that he lays himself open to challenge.

If there is any conclusion to be drawn from the book it is that, while we may have a guide to modern thought, modern thought itself is incapable of offering any guidance. For modern thought is not a coherent organon. It is a manifold enterprise: an eager and hopeful campaign of exploration marching, at unequal pace, along a number of fronts simultaneously. And the findings of the different armies of research do not always tally. In particular, there is today a marked disparity, as Mr. Joad points out, between the results reached by the physicists and biologists on one hand and the psychologists on the other. Physics has gradually been compelled to abandon the view that nothing exists in the universe except what can be reduced to a collocation of atoms. Pursuing Matter indefatigably, it has at last arrived at a conception of it as so tenuous that no effort of visualisation but only an abstruse mathematical formula can present it to our thoughts. In biology likewise there is a growing recognition that life is a unique category, and that its manifestations are not to be completely explained by physico-chemical formulæ. On the contrary, the tendency in psychology appears to be to see the human organism as a set of mechanical arrangements; though even here we witness a serious conflict —Pavlov and Watson as against Freud and the psycho-analysts. Mr. Joad has added to his discussion of these subjects an admirable résumé of the pros and cons of spiritualism, and a final chapter on the influence of scientific ideas on current fiction.

The book however leaves one with a sense of dissatisfaction because the author fails to establish a connection between his analysis of the scientific method—interpolated in the chapter on physics—with those religious and ethical questions which, as he observes at the outset, have for ages perplexed mankind. Sufficient prominence is not given to the consideration that if we admit that science only deals with the quantitative and numerical aspects of things, we admit implicitly that it is incapable of providing a solution for problems of a different kind. It is therefore scarcely worth examining whether its alleged answers to these problems are right. The error of the nineteenth century lay in its hasty conclusion that the light of science was bound sooner or later to dispel all darkness; since then thinkers such as Mach and Pearson have propagated a more cautious view of the nature of scientific inquiry. There is no need to be unduly perturbed at the contemporary divergence between physics and psychology; the method of each, in so far as it is scientific, is identical; and if one of them seems to enforce idealism and the other materialism, the reason must be sought in their uneven development: it is not to be inferred that their differing interpretations of Reality are authoritative. Neither of them can pretend to offer more than tentative and restricted generalisations, but the popular mind persists in attaching to them the immutability of an ultimate revelation. It cannot be too often repeated that Truth

—as a brilliant exponent of the scientific method has recently said—Truth, with a capital T, the eternal and indefectible Verity has no place in the vocabulary of science.

K. S. SHELVANKAR

From Faith to Faith: An Autobiography of Religious Development. By W. E. ORCHARD. (Putnam, London. *7s. 6d.*)

The story of any man's inner life is always of value to others, provided it be told with sincerity; and when such a story is narrated in good English by a man of wide humanitarian sympathies like Dr. Orchard, it should be of very great interest indeed. In the reading, however, *From Faith to Faith* scarcely fulfils its promise, because the range of religious ideas in which the author's mind moved was, except for a brief period, confined within the limits of Christian orthodoxy. Most of the book is devoted to a statement of the reasons which induced Dr. Orchard, and in his opinion should induce other Protestants, to enter the Roman Catholic Church. Granting the writer's premises, his arguments might be quite impressive; but nowadays, even among Christians, comparatively few actually do accept the Evangelical creed on which he builds his reasoning. To a Modernist, or non-Christian, the whole structure, which Dr. Orchard erects with so much pains, is as unreal as would be a mathematic built up on the initial proposition that two and two make five.

Having accepted Roman Catholic beliefs and practices while still a Congregationalist minister, it was inevitable that sooner or later Dr. Orchard should join the Roman Church outright. When a sane man has adopted an irrational and artificial form of belief, it is as difficult for him to maintain his position *alone* as it is for a pyramid to stand balanced on its apex; but when a number of inverted pyramids are contiguous, they serve to prop each other up. In like manner believers in the impossible find reassurance in association with each other. Would any one of the citizens of Ephesus have had the pluck to stand in the market place by himself shouting "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" for two hours on end? Such an exploit, however, presents no difficulty when one is surrounded by a multitude of like-minded enthusiasts.

Would any single human being accept the Creed of the Council of Trent on its own inherent merits if there were no great ecclesiastical corporation to give it sanction? But the man, in whose mind intellect and intuition are harmonised in a theory of life that is at once spiritual and rational, may be compared to a pyramid standing on its base. He can hold his position, unshaken and unperturbed, even though all those around him are carried off their feet by some collective folly or delusion.

Those who have admired Dr. Orchard's fine work in the past as the champion of humane causes, will be saddened to read some of his present conclusions, as for example, when he writes:—"How can anyone who seriously rejects Christianity be anything but tragic?"

There will be many who will see tragedy in the expression of such a sentiment by such a man. Again, when summarising his arguments at the end of the book, he writes:—

> If one rejects the Roman claims one must, eventually, reject Catholicism; if Catholicism is rejected, then gradually go doctrine, sacraments, scripture, Christ, God, man; hell, then heaven; the next world, then this; faith goes, then hope, then love. This is the logic of denial, darkness, death.

So faith, hope, and love are dependent on acceptance of the Roman claims! That he can seriously put forward such an inhuman doctrine is not likely to encourage his readers to follow Dr. Orchard's example in accepting those claims.

R. A. V. M.

Spices and Condiments. By H. S. REDGROVE. (Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons, London. 15*s*.)

It has been asserted that, with advances in scientific knowledge, meals as we understand them will be abolished, and instead of eating food we shall just swallow a daily tablet. This notion is a pure dream, divorced from reality and without any scientific basis.

Even if it were possible to compress sufficient body-building and energy-supplying material into minimal form for consumption, it would lack those "accessory food factors," the vitamins, without which health could not be maintained. Moreover, as man is constituted, he needs bulky food and, what is perhaps most important, he prefers to eat the things he likes most. A tablet diet would be flavourless and, as Mr. Redgrove points out, an attractive flavour in food stimulates the secretion of gastric juices. Hence well spiced food is more easily digested than that which is insipid, and whilst in Europe spices are not appreciated as much as they should be, their importance to the peoples of India can hardly be over-estimated.

The line of demarcation between spices and foodstuffs is not a very definite one. In France, we are reminded, the grocer is still *l'épicier*, or dealer in spices. Few of the foods we eat for their energy-producing or body-building properties are devoid of flavour, though they may often gain much in palatability by the addition of suitable herbs or spices.

Some dishes are best flavoured by one particular spice but others require well-balanced mixtures of several ingredients which are best used for instance as sauces, ketchups or curry. In his able work Mr. Redgrove has ventured to give a classification of spices and condiments. He then proceeds to describe rhizome and root spices (ginger, turmeric, zedoary, angelica, etc.), those from barks (including cinnamon and cassia) those from flowers (*e.g.* cloves, saffron, capers), the fruit spices (vanilla; the peppers; capsicum; cummin, dill and caraway; anise and fennel; pimento; star anise and juniper berries) and the seed spices (including cardamoms, nutmeg and mace, the three mustards, almonds and pistachio nuts).

It should be mentioned that spices, like odorous plant products generally, contained volatile "essential oils," so-called to distinguish them from the fixed oils, such as olive, castor and almond oils. In addition to being pleasantly aromatic these essential oils are, in general, excellent carminatives and antiseptics, and the medicinal virtues of spices have been recognised from earliest times.

To afford an indication of the range of the book, reference may be made to the author's account of poppy seeds which he classifies among the miscellaneous seed spices. Poppy seeds are perhaps a food rather than a spice. The oil is edible and in Czechoslovakia a fascinating form of pastry, containing a filling of honey and poppy seeds, is deservedly popular; and poppy seeds are much employed in cake-making in India. The plant is, of course, primarily cultivated in India for opium, which is the dried latex exuding when incisions are made in the unripe seed capsule. The seeds form an important secondary crop.

Spices and Condiments is profusely illustrated and contains much information concerning each spice, its sources, characteristics, history (Mr. Redgrove is also an authority on Alchemy), cultivation, uses and its constituents and their chemistry. Judging from the bibliography and the three indexes (botanical, chemical and general), it can only be inferred that the author has made his work as inclusive and useful as possible and it should appeal to a wide circle of general readers. He is indeed attempting to cultivate a greater interest in spices and condiments among European and American peoples.

GERALD DRUCE

Scientific Theory and Religion: *The World described by Science and its Spiritual Interpretation.* By Ernest William Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham. The Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen, 1927–1929. (Cambridge University Press. 25*s.*)

Bishop Barnes is one of the leaders of the Modernist section of the Anglican Church. He is also a distinguished man of science. In the present work he reviews very ably the whole field of scientific fact and theory, and tries to show that the result is not inconsistent with monotheism.

Without disrespect to the Bishop we may say that he is scientist first, and theologian afterwards. He is, for example, acutely aware of the difficulties inherent in his theological theories, but jumps without hesitation over the stumbling-blocks which Nature has scattered so freely on the path of the Darwinist. But for him indeed Darwinism is no longer a theory but a plain statement of fact.

"Eight hundred million years ago," he affirms categorically, "the ancestor of the modern leader of thought and aspiration was a worm in the sea-mud." Such natural facts as the infertility of hybrids, which made many shrewd biologists of a past generation hesitate to accept Darwin's hypothesis, Bishop Barnes waves aside with a gesture of reassurance; and in his chapter on "Man's Origin and Past," he sets forth only those data which appear to fit in with the theory of the gradual evolution of man from an ancestral ape, while passing over without mention such extremely significant discoveries as that at Ehringsdorf of a Neanderthal skull, vastly more ancient than any other known specimen, and yet much less simian and primitive than its later congeners—which may possibly mean that Neanderthal man was, not the ancestor, but the degenerate descendant of *homo sapiens*.

The Bishop's object in giving us his very able résumé of the sciences he tells us, is that he may point to them and say: "Such is our world. Such is its past development. Such is man's place within it. Is it reasonable or necessary to believe that the Christian God whose character is goodness and truth is alike its Creator and Ruler?" While he replies to this question in the affirmative, Dr. Barnes's answer lacks the complete assurance and certainty of his scientific pronouncements. A creator God? Yes; but how of "the far more fundamental source of perplexity in the fact that the whole process of creation now appears to be non-moral?" No "revolt of Angels," no theory of a "Fall," he goes on to admit, "will account for such facts. *In the end all attempts to take from God the responsibility for the nature of his creatures must fail* . . . . . So far as I see the situation we are confronted by a dilemma from which there is, at present, no escape . . . ."

The effect of which admission is to turn the Bishop's would-be affirmative reply into a virtual negative: there is no evidence in the facts of external Nature pointing to the existence of a benevolent Creator-God. So the Bishop is forced to turn to inner experience for the proof he seeks. In Man, he asserts, is the "Christ-Spirit". "The Christ-Spirit must be of God; and, if it also reveals God, then God is our Father."

Now, while the inner experiences of the mystics of all times are one in kind (though not in degree, be it noted) yet their attempts to explain and interpret those experiences in terms of philosophy or theology, differ very widely indeed; and it does not in the least follow that, because the experience is valid, the theory built on it is sound. What Dr. Barnes calls the Christ-Spirit is known elsewhere as the Buddha-nature: its existence in Man shows that there is a divinity in him; but it does not prove the truth of Christian theology, even in its most sublimated form.

It is difficult to understand how a man of such brilliant attainments as Bishop Barnes can exhibit an extreme parochialism in his attitude to the great religions of the East. He seems in fact to be scarcely aware of their existence.

To Buddhism he refers only once in the following words: "Popular Buddhism in China is recognised as degenerate by all who have studied its origin."

We cannot help wondering whether the Bishop would be satisfied if a Chinese writer of an important book on religion and science could find nothing more to say about Christianity than "Popular Christianity in Portugal is recognised as degenerate by all who have studied its origin"!

Perhaps the most interesting paragraph in the book is that, on page 620, in which Dr. Barnes describes the flashes of mystic illumination which came to him at intervals between the ages of 14 and 33. He writes:—

> I have felt, enjoyed and wondered at a sudden exaltation which seemed to carry with it an understanding of the innermost nature of things . . . . Time seemed to stop. A sense of infinite power and peace came upon me. . . Nothing happened: yet existence was completely full. All was clear. I was in a world where the confusion and waste and loss inseparable from time had vanished. At the heart of the world there was power and peace and eternal life . . . The memory remains. And it is because an inexplicable quality of supreme significance attaches to it that it remains precious.

R. A. V. M.

The Interpretation of Dreams. By SIGMUND FREUD. Translated by A. A. BRILL. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. 18s.)

The Interpretation of Dreams is Freud's *opus magnum*. When the first German edition appeared in 1900 "it aroused the scientific world from its lethargic indifference to the problem of dreams. Psycho-analysis became a fashionable cult, our dreams something to conjure with and not laugh at or dismiss. We talked a little vaguely about libido, neuroses, psychotherapy and the Œdipus complex. These sensational revelations were treasure trove to the writer. There was a spate of novels due to their influence, and the famous and infamous were put through the mill of psycho-analysis. In the first flush of excitement we liked to think that dreams were often unfulfilled desires in the waking state. It was a comforting and exhilarating thought to capture at night something elusive and forbidden during the day. Pepys's phrase, "and so to bed," was not enough. Nor did it suffice to indulge in heavy slumber. We were anxious to dream of something vivid and vital and intensely pleasurable. Freud, we said, was a complete master of the subject, and if he emphasised the immense importance of sex in dreams, we did not question his authority for so doing. We preferred to dream of Apollo or Aphrodite, and if we saw only a piece of sealing-wax or small cleft in a tree, they were erotic symbols.

The present issue of this classic work is based upon the eighth and latest German edition. It is a new translation by Dr. A. A. Brill and contains Freud's most recent formulations and psycho-analytic terminology which has come into existence since the publication of the first English edition. In the opinion of Freud it remains essentially unaltered. "It contains," he writes, "even according to my present-day judgment, the most valuable of all the discoveries it has been my good fortune to make. Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime."

Dr. Brill considers that *The Interpretation of Dreams* has stood the test of thirty-two years. Actually the book, outstanding though it be, has been severely challenged in certain respects. Freud has not seen fit to modify his interpretation of certain dreams, but other writers have done so to some purpose. Freud has always been considerably obsessed by what he considers to be phallic symbols, and on that particular subject many will seriously question his curiously biassed interpretation. He still solemnly asserts that a straw hat, when seen in a dream, "is really a male genital organ". Here his analysis is absurdly strained. We can dream of petrol pumps, small stalactites or stalagmites, the spout of a

teapot, pillar boxes, carrots, noses, and find in these symbols a much more rational meaning or even be prepared to take them at their face value.

If Freud stressed too much the importance of sex in the dream world, he rendered great service in discovering that dreams are often a key to character, mentality, health or sickness of the body. It is now recognised that a physician cannot employ therapeutic methods successfully when his patient is afflicted with phobias, obsessive and delusional ideas. He can only deal adequately with such a case by correctly explaining the origin of his patient's dream images.

Students of the occult and theosophists will realise that this dissector of dreams leaves unrecorded meetings on the astral plane.* His point of view is definite. To see the odd and fantastic figures which stand upon his study table is sufficient to indicate his own sex complex. Strümpell considers that "the flying dream is the adequate image employed by the mind to interpret the quantum of stimulus emanating from the rising and sinking of the pulmonary lobes when the cutaneous sensation of the thorax has lapsed into insensibility" (p. 53). Many dreams are no doubt induced by some physical condition, while others embellish or distort some experience in the waking state. But that is not all. There are dreams of the body and of the spirit, and neither Freud nor anyone else can probe the inner secret of all that happens while we sleep. [How can our reviewer be sure of the limitation of "any one" other than himself? —EDS.]

HADLAND DAVIS

The Symposium of Plato. By R. G. BURY. (W. Heffer and Sons Ltd., Cambridge. 7*s.*)

Mr. Bury's Symposium, first issued in 1909 and now brought up to date, is a scholarly edition which fills up a real lacuna in English commentaries. Besides textual criticism, which is the scholar's chief concern, it also deals with some of the obvious problems in the work, leading up to the important conclusion, tentatively advanced, that it was written to rehabilitate Socrates against a Symposium composed by Polycrates the rhetor. The movement of the dialogue, built up on the speeches of the various "guests," Phaedrus, Pausanias, etc., culminates in the sublimity of the Socrates-Diotima discourse and concludes appropriately enough by descending to earth in Socrates himself, praised by Alcibiades as the incarnation of Eros. Certain structural features, the way in which the serio-comic speeches of Aristophanes and Alcibiades are made to balance each other and the relation of Socrates to the other speakers, are well brought out, leaving no doubt that Socrates, as the philosopher pure and simple, is superior to the unphilosophical speakers who precede him. Love in the end is shown to be the dialectic process, and also the goal of that process, the desire which creates desire and also the contemplation, completely satisfactory, which ultimate truth provides.

The dialogues of Plato are a mirror in which Europeans, of whatever race, can recognise their common intellectual ancestry, and the importance of Plato, to a world which is rapidly being Europeanised, is therefore one of the highest degree. The intense dualism of the dialectic process, the struggle of the spirit out of its walls of matter, and the emphasis on pure thought, the sheer untrammelled thinking which accompanies it are both European in origin and are bound up in some curious way with each other. The first, albeit æstheticised and refined intellectually, reveals the same underlying rhythm as the European tragic drama and Christian crucifixion, while the second, a creation of the same area, has given birth to the

* This is a pseudo-theosophical belief. For the Occult and Theosophical explanations See *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, pp. 59–79.—EDS.

body of western philosophy and, in the last analysis, to modern science. What binds the two together in Plato is, of course, the obsession with transcendental unity and the magic of that formula, "thou shalt, of a sudden, see something wondrous," which overshadowed European thought for so long. To-day we are Europeans in thought but no longer in feeling, and there is reason to believe that the tragic movement from dualism to mystical unity is in process of atrophy. The development of modern thought, beginning with the Italian philosophers and popularised by Bacon, has been to shift the direction of the mind from the (apparently) remote to the apparently immediate, and the consequences in feeling and thought, are beginning to make themselves felt. Hence the lack of catharsis in the modern mind and the activity, febrile but impotent, which seems to characterise it. In conclusion it is worth noting that a study of the Symposium on the lines of the Golden Bough, but without the naturalistic assumptions, might reveal some remarkable logical preconceptions and an analogy, dimly apparent even now, with the Greek tragic drama.

F. McEACHRAN

An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism. By BENOYTOSH BHATTACHARYYA. (Oxford University Press. 15*s.*)

The title of this work is definitely misleading. A far better description of it is given by the author in his preface, where he says that his latest work "represents the first instalment of a series of investigations into this fascinating branch of study [Tantra], and an attempt to place before scholars a dispassionate account of the Tantras in general, and Buddhist Tantras in particular". In his opinion the Hindu population of India to-day is in the grip of Tantra and the time is therefore ripe for someone to study the origin and treatment of this "disease". The author, however, fails to maintain this laudable point of view, and by the time he reaches the last page has arrived at the amazing opinion that "Tāntric culture is the greatest contribution made by India towards the world's civilisation".

It may be that the author's opinions are affected by his views on the origin of Tantra, for in stating, as he does in the opening statement of the book, that "Tantrism originated from primitive magic," he seems to represent that strange anomaly, a son of Aryavarta who is ignorant of his country's spiritual heritage. Still more strange is his attitude to Buddhism; and his patronising statements about the Buddha,—for example, "he was not entirely free from the superstitious beliefs current in his time"—necessarily vitiate the value of his study of Buddhist tantrism.

With Chapter IV, however, we pass to more valuable material in the form of an outline of the purer principles of Buddhist Tantra, but even this is marred by the fundamental fallacy that magical practices grew up instead of having degenerated down from genuinely esoteric Buddhism, or as it might be more accurately written, Budhism or Bodhism the arcane Wisdom of the Ages.

That true teachings are to be found in Tantra is beyond question, but truths are only of value when rightly applied; and when even cosmic principles are interpreted in terms of sexual orgies the fair face of Truth is shamed indeed. That sexual union is a physical and carnal presentation of the union of cosmic forces, we may grant; but no man ever learnt the reality of sacred truths by making them an excuse for self-indulgence, and the literal and materialistic attitude of mind that pervades all Tantra is the answer to any claim on its behalf to bear the name of Buddhist Esoterism.

We respectfully commend to Mr. Bhattacharyya a study of the Teachings of which Tantra in all its forms is at the best a degraded parody.

CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS

Peace at Eventide. By HELEN KELLER (Methuen & Co., London. 1s.)

"O wondrous alchemy of pain transmuting loss into golden harvests of good." Thus writes Helen Keller who has "suffered many a bereavement and many a sorrow," yet lives a useful happy life, because of the recognition that "suffering and death are the great teachers of Humanity". Helped by her faith "in the goodness of Life, in the recreative power of the Spirit," many are the truths that she has extracted from her experiences. We learn that if sorrow enervates, it can also ennoble; also that birth and death, corresponding to day and night, are the two manifested aspects of the One Eternal Life which is beyond both.

The book is chiefly addressed to the bereaved, "the largest company in all the world". It is more an appeal to the intuitive than to the reasoning mind. The realisation of the existence of the spiritual world, showing that "here we play with shadows, there we live the reality" will surely bring us "peace at eventide". Every evening at twilight the soul can bathe in the peace that flows from the Regenerate Souls; at the hour of bodily death the personal self can feel the peace that flows from the Divinity within; but in both instances that eventide experience comes only to him who has controlled and purified the self of passions and prejudices.

N. K.

Humanity's Greatest Need: The Common Message of the World's Great Teachers. By HUGH MCCURDY WOODWARD, Ph. D. (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. $ 2.50.)

"Religions," said Confucius, "are many and different, but reason is one. The broad-minded see the truth in different religions, the narrow-minded only see the differences." These words of the great Chinese sage have been adopted by the author as the motto for his book, which he has dedicated to "the increase of tolerance, to a better understanding between peoples and races and to the rising tide of world unity". Professor Woodward is a student of the great religions and is convinced that many difficulties would disappear if men and women would cultivate real tolerance and faithfully apply in their everyday lives the teachings of the ancient prophets and sages. Taking six of these great prophets, namely, Krishna, Lao-Tze, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius and Jesus—the author points out that cults and creeds, dogmas and rituals, have grown up about their philosophies and teaching, but when divested of these accretions it is found that a great common message runs through them all. This common message is discussed in this volume with a wealth of quotations from all the sacred books.

There are signs that an increasing number of thinking men and women are turning to the great religions as affording what our author calls "a unified and adequate philosophy of life"; and those who look askance at the great religions as unsuited to the needs of the present century will find reason to modify their views appreciably on perusing Professor Woodward's book.

The author, who is Professor of Philosophy of Education in an American University, pleads eloquently in his last chapter for a combined organization of educators in the more advanced countries to propagate true culture and enlightenment in the backward countries.

We would venture to draw Professor Woodward's attention to the works of Madame Blavatsky, which are not included in the "books suggested for reading," but which many years ago showed the essential unity of all the great religions of the world when freed from the accretions and distortions caused by ignorance and priestcraft. We are sure that *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* would prove of great interest to the author.

J. P. W.

A Daughter of the Samurai. By ETSU INAGAKI SUGIMOTO. (Hurst and Blackett Ltd., London. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

Much has been written in praise of the Japanese women before Japan threw over the culture of China and imitated the greed and ugliness of the West. She represented femininity in perfected form. She was modest, charming, intelligent, loyal to her ancestors, and in native dress was as good to look upon as a bright butterfly or flower. It has been written: "In the eternal order of things, which is the higher being,—the childish, confiding, sweet Japanese girl, or the superb, calculating, penetrating, Occidental Circe of our more artificial society, with her enormous power for evil and her limited capacity for good?"

Those who read *A Daughter of the Samurai* will know how to answer that question, for in that book will be found the autobiography of a Japanese lady who reflects in sensitiveness to beauty, in courage and restraint, in tolerance and true piety, the very flower of Japanese womanhood at its best. Not since the far away days of Lady Murasaki has a woman written so finely about her own country.

Mrs. Sugimoto describes life in her old Samurai home in the province of Echigo at a time when tremendous changes were taking place in Japan, when even the Emperor might be seen of all men and the Samurai were no longer an integral part of the country they had once served so well. It was a most difficult time, especially in an impoverished home where the Buddhist faith was strong and where its members still clung tenaciously to old traditions. That life is described with minute and fascinating detail, a valuable record of something exceedingly good which has since passed away.

Sent to a school in Tokio, Mrs. Sugimoto became a Christian. She does not tell us what led her to adopt that faith; but with a foreign religion, an excellent knowledge of English literature, and a few years of married life in America, she still most happily remains a Samurai's daughter. She did not relinquish the old customs of her country. She was not ashamed of them as so many modern and so called progressive Japanese claim to be. She revered the past. She delighted to narrate to her children certain legends which will be new to most readers. How well she told the ancient story of "Lady Moon and Her Enemies," and with what skill she described the *Ura Bon*—A Welcome to Souls Returned. We share something of her pleasure when she found in one of the family godowns a bloodstained coat, Masamune sword, a rod of lacquered wood which once belonged to Tokugawa Ieyasu—and were presented by him to Mrs. Sugimoto's ancestor on the battlefield of Sekigahara.

A servant once said to Mrs. Sugimoto when she was a little girl: "I am thankful to the gods that I am lowly born and can cry when my heart is filled with ache and can laugh when my heart sings." Such emotional relief was not for Mrs. Sugimoto. It was part of her rigid Samurai training to face life bravely. Much trouble came her way, for there is more shadow than sunshine in this revealing book, but she met it with courage and fortitude. We are conscious of a fine spiritual quality, a rare tenderness and tolerance toward humanity. In a book that seems compact of steel and fragrant blossom, of wisdom and beauty, kindness and endurance, we like to recall Mrs. Sugimoto performing Buddhist rites after the death of her mother, love making her serve Buddha and Christ from a full heart.

Now that Jehol is taken by the Japanese who have definitely renounced the treasure of the past and accepted in its place unworthy greed, it is good to record these words from a daughter of a Samurai: "To degrade one's pride—to loose one's hold on the best, after having had it—is death to the soul growth of man or nation." In this book is enshrined the very spirit of Old Japan. It is a tragedy that it is no longer a living force in the Far East.

HADLAND DAVIS

CORRESPONDENCE

FROM RELIGIONS TO RELIGION

[We print two contributions, similar and yet different, one written by a Hindu, the other by a Parsi, both pleading for an attempt to educate the race mind which is so puzzled and confused. Their plea reminds us of the words of H. P. Blavatsky written in 1877 :—

" We would that all who have a voice in the education of the masses should first know and then *teach* that the safest guides to human happiness and enlightenment are those writings which have descended to us from the remotest antiquity ; and that nobler spiritual aspirations and a higher average morality prevail in the countries where the people take their precepts as the rule of their lives. . . . . The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church—the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter but penetrable by any one who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God.* "—*Isis Unveiled* II, 635.]

HARMONY OF RELIGIONS

[**Swami Jagadiswarananda** of the Ramakrishna Mission suggests that time has come for a League of Religions to seek the common principles underlying all religions. He refers to the Eternal Religion of which all creeds are partial expressions, and his plea is reminiscent of *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 794) in which H. P. Blavatsky wrote :—

"If coming events are said to cast their shadows before, past events cannot fail to leave their impress behind them. It is, then, by those shadows of the hoary Past and their fantastic silhouettes on the external screen of every religion and philosophy, that we can, by checking them as we go along, and comparing them, trace out finally the body that produced them. There must be truth and fact in that which every people of antiquity accepted and made the foundation of its religions and its faith."]

In 1893 at the World's Fair in Chicago a Parliament of Religions was held and it has had epoch-making consequences. This year again, in the same city, a Parliament is going to be convened and so the ideals and hopes underlying its work should occupy our minds.

Humanity is weary of religious rivalry. A sweet breeze of liberalism and universalism is blowing—a holy omen. The magic of the heavenly Malaya (monsoon) is at work. The religions are out-growing their creedal limits. The leaders of religions are engaged in universalizing the doctrines of their faiths. Science, the great disinfectant of human thought, is mainly responsible for this. The religious reformer desiring a new lease of life for his creed must seek a common ground where all religions meet ; a creed satisfied with its own " doxy " is doomed. Universalism is the spirit of the age, and no religion is immune from this influence of the time-spirit. Look at the rigid faith of Islam. The Bahai and Ahmadiyya movements, are liberalising it. Of course the former is wider and broader in scope than the latter, but as far as Islam is concerned both are liberalizing influences. In the Buddhist world too this spirit is at work and tangible changes are evident in Japan, China and Ceylon. In Christianity a manifold reformation is freeing all church denominations. In Hinduism the spirit is most manifest in the forms of the Arya Samaj, the Brahmo Samaj and the Ramakrishna Mission. The Theosophical Movement is the brightest result in the direction. I am but chronicling the truth if I say that Theosophy has

pointed out and proven that all religions spring from one source and are esoterically and essentially the same, though exoterically and externally they are diverse.

But unfortunately a very crude and quixotic idea of religion prevails which is the most obstinate stumbling block in the emergence of the Universal Religion. Religion is not a belief in doctrines and dogmas. It is not church-going, temple-worshipping, mosque-attending or vihara-visiting. It is not an intellectual assent or dissent. It is emphatically a becoming. It is the realization of the Deepest Truth, Eternal Wisdom and Everlasting Bliss. It is not only an elimination of vices but an illumination of Virtue.

" Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. Manifest this divinity within by controlling nature internal and external. Do this either by work or worship, psychic control or philosophy; by one or more or all of these and be free—this is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, rituals or forms, books and Churches are but secondary details."

All religions are unanimous about the present state of man on earth—that of servitude and suffering, bondage and bewilderment. All religions are also one in their affirmation that man has power latent within himself to transcend his limitations and to attain the supersensuous and superconscious state. For religion is the rejection of the finite and the pursuit of the Infinite. True religion can lead man to the Celestial City, of which Kashi and Lhassa, Rome and Jerusalem, Mecca and Medina are but earthly reflections. Religion comes from the root 'Ligo,' *i.e.*, to bind or unite, and implies the reunion of the Human and the Divine.

How can a harmony of religions be made practicable? The solution is a simple one. If we make a comparative study of the *original* teachings of the world-teachers we shall find to our surprise that they have a fundamental unity; for "Truth" says the *Rig-Veda*, "is one but Sages call it variously". Truth perceived by them in the superconscious is one, but they had to explain it in different ways to suit the needs of the place and the time. The human mind varies to a certain extent according to soil and century. So the teachers had to modify their message and speak in the language of the people; for that is the mission of their life. Scriptures are nothing but the meagre and minor records of their spiritual experience. Spiritual laws like the material ones have a basic uniformity. So scriptures too are essentially one. Difference is only in name and form. Man has labelled their simple but profound teachings as Christianity, Buddhism etc. Difference created by these different religions is man-made. Christ was not a Christian, Buddha was not a Buddhist, Mohomed was not a Muslim, nor was Krishna a Hindu. They lived and taught what may be rightly called the Eternal or Absolute Religion as they were the members of one Invisible Church, Masters of one Great School, Maha-Shala. So different religions are but local and partial manifestations of the one Universal Religion. As W. Wilson said, "There is a greater thing than the spirit of the age and that is the spirit of the ages."

Every religion has three essential divisions: ritual, mythology and ethics-philosophy. The last one contains the eternal principles which are identical in all religions. Purity, self-control, unselfishness and renunciation are not the monopoly or exclusive possessions of any particular religion but are common properties of all religions. Mythology is illustration of the ethical and philosophical principles. And rituals are concretized or dramatised philosophy. There are different grades of human competency—hence this modification and simplification. Everybody cannot grasp the high philosophy of a religion. So the other two become necessary. Ritual and mythology may be called the Kindergarten of religions. They are like nurses indispensable in spiritual childhood. They have their place in life but man must transcend them to

understand higher religion. Many fall short of the ideal and the displacement of the search for truth frequently occurs. Aspirants are bound down to forms and ceremonies. Hence the darkness of the discord and disagreement. How then can the harmony of religions be given a true shape? We say it already exists. Only our eyes are out of focus and cannot see it. Every religion is potentially a Universal Religion. And what is wanted to realize Universal Religion is a *reinterpretation* of religions; brings to the forefront the common basis, and gives it prominence and importance. Let me give an example. Take the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The orthodox Christian claims that this doctrine is special to his religion but a student of comparative religions finds it in every creed. According to Christian doctrine there is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost or Spirit. In Buddhism, particularly in the Mahayana School, the Doctrine of the Divine Trinity does exist—Dharma Kaya, Sambhoga Kaya and Nirmana Kaya. It exists in Taoism as Tao, Ti and Laotze and in Hinduism Brahman, Iswara and Avatara or Krishna, Sankara etc.

Then every teacher has emphasized that his followers can attain the stage he has attained.* Every Christian is a potential Christ. Buddha emphasised that Buddhahood is the goal, and that every Buddhist is a potential Buddha. The same is true of the followers of other religions. Logical is the deduction—Christ is not the only son of God, Mohomed is not the only Prophet, Buddha is not the only enlightened one, Krishna is not the only Avatara and Moses is not the only Messiah. The truth is that great souls are the manifestations in flesh and blood of what is called Allaha, Heavenly Father, Adam Kadmon, Shiva and Vishnu and by other names. Besides these there are many more points of contact between the religions. All the religions owe allegiance to Holy Men, Holy Books and Holy Places. Whether Supermen or Siddhapurushas, Mahatmas or Adepts, Nirmana Kayas or Bodhisattwas, every religion pays respect to perfected souls. So also Holy Books. Symbolism is common to religions. The Cross to a Christian, a Chest with two Angels on both sides to a Jew, the Divine Image to a Hindu, the Kaba and Crescent to a Muslim and the Swastika and Lotus to the Buddhist are holy symbols. Symbols are part and parcel of religion. Why then run down one and praise another? Water of Zimzim is holy to Muslims, that of Gunga to Buddhists and Hindus, that of Jordan to the Christians; why then say that one is superior to another?

The religion of the future will be that Eternal Religion of which these religions are partial or modified manifestations. The first step is not only tolerance but appreciation of all religions, all scriptures, and all prophets. We may have one chosen ideal but we should adore and reverence all teachers. We may have one favourite scripture-book but we must expand and deepen our outlook by comparative study of religions and by assimilation of all true teachings. This is what is called *Ishtānishta* in India, known to the Hindus from hoary antiquity. No particular scripture will have a singular sway over the world, but the Eternal Wisdom hidden in all scriptures will—and that is the Religion of Man. No more will one teacher be adored in the shrine of human thought. All the world-teachers will be worshipped in the Temple of the Future. America, next to India, has taken the lead in this. In a Baptist Church at Riverside in New York, Confucius, Buddha, Christ, Mohomed are installed along with other God-men. In the temple of the Universal Spirit of the Ananda Ashrama at California, the founders of all religions are installed and worshipped, as in some Shrines of the Ramakrishna Mission in India. But in Hinduism through the ages this spirit of cosmic synthesis is most manifest.

*According to an Eastern proverb a learned Rabbi said, "You are also Israel, for any one in quest of light is Israel".

The modern world is disillusioned of Geneva. The League of Nations has failed to effect a world-unity based on politics. This cannot be but so, for politics is founded on self-interest and exercise of rights. Religion, the most significant of race experiences, can almost prescribe a remedy for the defeatism of the modern age. America has been pioneer in recently starting a World-League to create a cultural unity. Will America again lead the nations to start a League of Religions where leaders of religions will devise practical steps to expand, universalize and internationalize religions and save mankind from imminent ruin?

Colombo SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

WISDOM-RELIGION: THE SOLUTION OF OUR PROBLEMS

[**Student's** arguments carry us a step forward. He shows that Wisdom-Religion, Bodhi-Dharma, expounded by H. P. Blavatsky affords an excellent basis for practical work.]

An interesting discussion took place at a meeting of the East India Association held in March last when Sir Albion Banerji read a paper on "India's Social and Religious Problems and the New Constitution" (*Asiatic Review*, April). The multiplicity of castes, creeds and religions which divide the people of India was the main theme of discussion and it was held by several speakers, including Sir Albion, that it would be inadvisable to create self-governing institutions in this country until there was social and religious unity among our people, leaving alone the question of India's fitness for complete self-government. I propose to deal briefly with the suggestions made by the different speakers at the meeting of the East India Association for evolving social order out of the existing chaos.

Sir Albion thought that in view of the conflict of innumerable factions rooted in religious sentiments, customs and practices, religion itself stood in the greatest possible danger of being wiped out in India; he feared that this country, like Russia, would find itself in the throes of an anti-religious movement. Such a result would rejoice the heart of Sir Albion's distinguished fellow-countryman, Mr. R. P. Paranjpe, who in his little book the *Crux of the Indian Problem* advocated the overthrow of all religions and the adoption of pure rationalism to ensure India's progress on sound lines. In the opinion of Sir Albion and other speakers such a result would be a disaster. Sir Albion's panacea for averting this disaster may be set out in his own words:

> India is at the parting of the ways. What is needed to-day is a new Brahmo Samaj movement, call it what you will, embracing all religions and communities and having social service uplift as a main purpose. It is through such a movement that the true idea of nationalism can grow.

But how is the new faith to be brought into existence? Obviously Sir Albion seems to hold that the strong hand of the British is necessary until such time as a great religious leader shall arise and establish a new faith calculated to unify the conflicting sects and creeds and religions existing at the present day. Another remedy advocated was the conversion of the people to Christianity, but Sir Albion rightly brushed this aside. Yet another speaker seriously suggested the creation of a special European Police Reserve to meet emergencies that might arise owing to religious and communal feuds. Indeed, there was an air of unreality about the whole discussion, and no constructive proposals came forth. Let us see whether we can make some useful contribution to the discussion.

In his *India and the Future*, published during the war, Mr. William Archer pictured this great country as being steeped in barbarism; the Hindu religion and culture came in for much

misguided adverse criticism. Mr. Archer's fallacies were smashed by Sir John Woodroffe, a former Chief Judge of the Calcutta High Court and a profound scholar of Hindu philosophy and religion. In his *Is India Civilized?* he pointed out that Mr. Archer's generalizations were based on very imperfect knowledge, for he—

> lumps together indiscriminately matters which are contrary to the eternal Dharma; matters unconnected with or unessential to it and of comparatively recent development; and matters sanctioned by religion but which had in some degree been misunderstood or misapplied and had thus become an abuse.

Sir John Woodroffe added :—

> It has been well said that the tree of Indian Dharma is very ancient and it is not therefore surprising if in the course of the ages, some parasites have gathered on its trunk.

Sir John went on to differentiate between the principles of the Hindu religion and the accretions that had gathered round them. He stressed the necessity of removing the accretions so that the principles might be observed in their pristine purity. Those who like Sir Albion Banerji are bewildered at the endless divisions and sub-divisions in Hindu society will find serious food for reflection in these observations :—

> To many a foreigner therefore Indian beliefs and practices seem a "jungle" in which there is no path. There is a path. Meanwhile those who have not found it will save their credit if they avoid generalization on a subject which they do not understand. As I show later India does possess *a spiritual unity* for it possesses certain common fundamental beliefs. It also displays a wondrous variety of belief and practice suited to the capacities and temperaments of men. One of the most interesting enquiries is that which seeks the Theme of which there are the variations. The Theme will endure whilst their variations may either alter or pass away.

Indeed, a perusal of the book will prove an excellent corrective to the fallacies and misconceptions which appear to have found abundant expression at the meeting of the East India Association.

Now the task of unravelling the fundamental unity underlying all religions has been already performed by the great founder of the Theosophical Movement, Madame H. P. Blavatsky. She emphasised in her monumental works, *The Secret Doctrine* and *Isis Unveiled* the absolute unity of nature, and taught that this unity implied and justified a belief in the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious, showing the necessity and actuality of the connection of man and all things in the Universe, and to this knowledge in its integrity and universality she gave the name of Wisdom-Religion, (Bodhi-Dharma). She wrote :—

> It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual "Religions" (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings. There are those creeds—we shall call them religions—which have now been overlaid with the human element out of all recognition; others just showing signs of early decay; not one that escaped the hand of time. But each and all are of divine, because natural and true origin; aye—Mazdeism, Brahminism, Buddhism as much as Christianity. It is the dogmas and human element in the latter which led directly to modern Spiritualism. (*Is Theosophy a Religion, U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 1.*)

A study of the Wisdom-Religion as given to the world during the last century through the instrumentality of Madame Blavatsky is the only true and safe remedy to stop the ceaseless disputes and wrangles and even bloodshed that take place in the name of religions. Individual religions in the form in which they exist to-day must repel all thinking men and women. As Madame Blavatsky said in her *Isis Unveiled*:—

> Our examination of the multitudinous religious faiths that mankind, early and late, have professed, most assuredly indicates that they have all been derived from one primitive source . . . Combined, their aggregate represents one eternal truth; separate, they are but shades of human error and the signs of imperfection. —(Vol. II. p. 639.)

Sir Albion's complaint about the Theosophical Society and some other bodies

named is that their adherents spend their energies and use their organizations largely for political ends. It may be here mentioned that in 1883 Col. H. S. Olcott, the President of the Theosophical Society, issued a statement to all members warning them against meddling in politics. In the course of that statement, Col. Olcott said :—

> That our members, and others whom it interests, may make no mistake as to the Society's attitude as regards Politics, I take this occasion to say that our rules and traditional policy alike prohibit every officer and fellow of the Society, AS SUCH, to meddle with political questions in the slightest degree, and to compromise the Society by saying that it has, AS SUCH, any opinion upon those or any other questions.

This had the full support of H. P. Blavatsky, who, in a letter addressed to the American Theosophists, in 1888, said :—

> Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those . . . who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor. But in our quality of Theosophists, we cannot engage in any one of these great works in particular. As individuals we may do so, but as Theosophists we have a larger, more important, and much more difficult work to do. (*Five Messages*, p. 8)

Obviously, when Sir Albion spoke of the Theosophical Society he had in mind the Adyar organization at present presided over by Dr. Annie Besant. This body has taken a part in political agitation, but it should be noted that in this as in numerous other respects the teachings and activities of the Adyar organization and those of the original Movement of Madame Blavatsky are poles asunder. The pages of THE ARYAN PATH bear witness to the fact that many turn to the Wisdom-Religion expounded by Madame Blavatsky as affording the best and the most satisfactory solution of the many conflicting problems of the day. Only by the spread of this Wisdom-Religion will the communal feuds and caste strifes in this country and elsewhere be brought to an end.

Bombay STUDENT

THE VALUE OF THE AYURVEDIC SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

The English who came to India in the eighteenth century came with a preconceived notion that Ayurveda was quackery and that Hindu works on the subject were nonsense. This contemptuous view, arrived at without previous investigation, has had the effect not only of keeping the English up to the present day in great ignorance regarding this famous medical system, but also of injuring in some measure the progress of the system itself.

The medical educationalists and administrators have made every effort to glorify Allopathy at the expense of Ayurveda. But Ayurveda is not so easily killed, and even in this "scientific" century claims notice. Ridicule and opposition have failed, and its value is now beginning reluctantly to be recognized. And indeed the time is ripe for this. We should no longer be in ignorance of the value of our indigenous system.

Ayurveda has eight branches :—

1. *Shalya*, or Surgery and Midwifery together.
2. *Shalakya*, or Surgery of the Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat, etc.
3. *Kayachikitsa*, or Practice of Medicine.
4. *Bhuta-Vidya*, or Treatment of Mental Diseases (including so called obsessions).
5. *Kaumara-Bhritya*, or Hygiene and treatment of children.
6. *Agada-Tantra*, or Diagnosis and Treatment of Poisons—vegetable, mineral and animal, including snake-bite, rabies, etc.
7. *Rasayana*, or Hygienic and Preventive Medicine for the attainment of longevity and the rejuvenation of old age.
8. *Vajeekarana-Tantra* or Sexual Science including sexual hygiene and treatment of sexual diseases.

It will thus be seen that Ayurveda includes almost all the branches known to the present-day Western medical system. As Western medicine, Ayur-

veda has its medicine, surgery, midwifery, hygiene, bacteriology, chemistry, materia medica, physiology, anatomy, and so on. The late Chief Justice of Bengal, Sir John Woodroffe says :—

The country abounds in valuable herbal and other remedies. Ayurvedic remedies are effective, as I personally know in respect of those which I have tried. They do not harm as some allopathic drugs do. Like all Indian things they are gentle and natural in action; they are cheap, easily available, to be had almost for the cost of gathering them.

The testimony of this erudite man and of scholars of his way of thinking is brushed aside by the "all knowing" I.M.S., as is evidenced in the remark of Major-General Hehir :—"You can fool judges and barristers and not us." So obediently banning judges and barristers as persons likely to be fooled, I shall attempt to establish the value of Ayurveda by culling from the Report of the Madras Government Committee on the indigenous system of Medicine :—

The indigenous system of medicine is perfect, logical and scientific from the standpoint of science and art and it is quite self-sufficient and economical. The committee is of opinion that it is only through the promotion of the Indian system that the Government can help to achieve the idea of medical relief in the reach of all people.

A better testimony to the value of Ayurveda one could not wish for. But who can wake up those who insist on sleeping? Despite Government apathy, however, its popularity is testimony to its value as a medical system and its worth as a mode of cure. Ayurveda is believed by many to be a moribund science and some have asked why we should try to revive it. This shows to what depth of degradation we have descended. A man or people who have no faith in themselves will not, and do not, deserve to succeed. For he who has no faith in himself must lean upon another.

Ayurveda, a dead science! Let me venture to adapt, making the necessary changes, the reply of Sir John Woodroffe to his friend's statement that India is a dead country.

Only those are dead who believe themselves to be so. Ayurveda is not dead. It is yet alive, though not fully awake to-day. It is precisely because it is a living force that it provokes antagonism from those who dislike or fear its culture. Does any one now fume against or ridicule the medical systems of Greece, Egypt, Persia or Arabia? They are left as things which are dead and gone to the scientific dissection of the cool historian. But while touching Ayurveda even the scholars could not be impartial. Why? Because Ayurveda is not the mere subject of academic talk, but is a living force. Ayurveda is still feared where it is not loved. Why, again? Precisely because it lives, because it is still potentially powerful to impose its ideas upon the world. It is still an antagonist to be reckoned with in the conflict of medical cultures Why has it, with its pathology so different from any other of the West and yet so unique, been preserved? Ayurveda lives because of the world purpose which it has to fulfil; because the world can be enriched by what it can give to the other medical systems.

It is not possible in a short space to do justice to the vast theme of Ayurveda, but let me sum up by saying that Ayurveda is the flower of Indian culture and Aryan civilization as much as Western medicine is the flower of modern civilization; but to mutilate one fragrant flower for the glorification of another is bad horticulture and heart culture too!

Bangalore M. R. SAMEY

SHAKESPEARE THROUGH EASTERN EYES

Having previously enjoyed reading Dr. Ranjee Shahani's stimulating book, when, in your May issue, I came upon the letter over the initials "J. S.," I was reminded of a performance of Hamlet I saw at Benares. No sooner had the Ghost appeared than a terrific hailstorm made such thunderous clamour on the iron roof of the theatre that the audience were quite unable to follow the speeches on the stage.

When your reviewer, Prof. G. Wilson Knight, said "wide knowledge," he probably referred to the Shakespeareology and philosophic problems and not to the Indian vernaculars, about which I daresay he cared little. Of course it *is* a pity that Dr. Shahani did not know that Indian students are made to read Hamlet in a Mahrathi version for examination purposes! It would have given him an opportunity

for extending the evidence adduced in his first chapter against the current methods of education. But it is sheer pedantry to dwell on such trivial items.

And when J. S. disputed Dr. Shahani's statement that religion is so vital with the Oriental "that it becomes the very basis of his literary criticism," and suggests that the dicta of Swami Vivekananda are not a near approach to Eastern standards, he surely confuses the issue in adding, though obviously himself no Vedantist, that "everything, including our Doctor's thesis, is Brahma —or Maya."

It is true that Indians appreciate the æsthetic emotion in literature as much as any other people but the dominant quality in their artistic creations is religious: not in any sectarian sense of the word but in its wide fundamental aspect which is nothing but mysticism in spite of J. S.'s contention that mysticism is essentially incompatible with the spiritual atmosphere of "classical" Sanskrit literature. But J. S. says not a word about the most pregnant chapter in the book, the one called "The Great Disillusionment" which, in discussing Shakespeare the thinker, develops further the previous chapter dealing with religion.

Again, J. S. is unpardonably misleading when he says "The Doctor has every right to call Shakespeare a third-rate poet." Nowhere in his book does Dr. Shahani either say or imply any such disparagement.

The author declares in his preface that he has striven to be purely objective, expressing the appeal Shakespeare makes to the Eastern consciousness. He insists emphatically that he has tried to avoid any mere personal judgment of his own. This does excuse some suspicion of irony and makes at least one appreciative reader eager for a sequel in which Dr. Shahani *will* give us his own personal judgments. Mr. Kanyalal Vakil of Bombay is reported in the *Bangalore Mail* of March 18 as having said that Shakespeare does not touch the Indian life and as such cannot be said to possess the elements essential for the national reconstruction of the Indian theatre.

London A. HUGH FISHER

As a British-born Shakesperean student, may I be permitted to make a few comments upon the letter signed "J. S." (Bombay), which appeared in your May issue.

Concerning the accuracy, or otherwise, of Dr. Shahani's comments upon "Shakespeare," in relation to the Indian stage, and to Indian thought in general, I can express no opinion, since the subject is one upon which I am not well informed; but "J. S.'s" letter strikes me as being too much concerned with small points of criticism, *e. g.*, Dr. Shahani's "Marahti" instead of the correct "Marathi"—and too little with the wider and more important issues that are raised in the book under discussion. "J. S.," in my judgment, displays a personal bias unworthy of so large a subject, and is more ready to represent Dr. Shahani as eager "to score off," and "to demolish Shakespeare and thus appear original," than he is willing to judge righteous and impersonal judgment. "J. S.," for example, makes no direct mention of the chapter upon "Shakespeare as a Thinker," which, when I read the book, seemed to me to contain its central point.

To an ever-increasing number of thoughtful students, the world over—among whom I would wish to be numbered—"Shakespeare," while maintaining intact his reputation as poet and dramatist, is rightly losing the exaggerated and uncritical respect hitherto accorded to him as an original thinker; and I, for one, am wholly with Dr. Shahani, when he opines that our great national dramatist has never voiced the noblest experiences of the human spirit, namely those that we entitle religious.

It is time that the truth was told about "Shakespeare"; and the truth is that he was no deep thinker. The philosophy of Hamlet, even—and Hamlet, by common consent, is nearer

to "Shakespeare" himself than any other character in the plays—is, I am confident, borrowed mainly from contemporary books of popular philosophy, especially from Bedingfield's "Cardanus Comfort" (1573).

George Chapman, the "rival poet" of "Shakespeare's" Sonnets, and a far deeper thinker than "Shakespeare" himself, attacks his fellow dramatist openly, in III. 4. of his tragedy, "The Revenge of Bussy," which is an obvious counterblast to the revenge of Hamlet; and it is a most interesting fact that Chapman charges Hamlet-Shakespeare with superficial thinking, in a fashion very analogous, at bottom, to that employed by Dr. Shahani, more than 300 years later. These points I have elaborated in a book, "Plays of Shakespeare and Chapman in Relation to French History," which will soon be published, in London, by Mr. Denis Archer.

That certain of "J. S.'s" criticisms of Dr. Shahani's book may be well justified, I will not presume to deny; but my plea is that, in endeavouring to determine the truth about Shakespeare, we had best keep, primarily, to the finer, larger, more impersonal issues that underlie this compelling subject.

London PERCY ALLEN

I thank the Editors for their courtesy in sending these letters to me before publication. Mr. Fisher's epistle calls for no remarks; it must be enjoyed as it is.

As for Mr. Percy Allen's more thoughtful indictment of my criticisms, I must state that I have never met nor have known anything about Dr. Shahani. How then can I have any "personal bias" against him?

As for the other counts: my reason for pointing out Dr. Shahani's numerous mistakes of fact should be plain to one who has read his book and my criticism of it. The author claims to base his "thesis," as to how the Indian mind reacts to Shakespeare, firstly, on his own notions of Eastern and Indian criteria and canons of literary and artistic criticism, while his book shows that he has no first hand acquaintance with these canons and criteria; secondly, on the renderings and stage representations of the Poet-Dramatist in various vernaculars of India,—the bare facts I have enumerated show that Dr. Shahani has no direct knowledge of these renderings and representations or even of the vernaculars he mentions. Hence the stress I have laid on the fact that Dr. Shahani does not seem to know even the correct spelling of the name of the vernacular, "Marathi," about renderings and representations in which he professes to enlighten his readers. I may incidentally point out that the reviewer of the book in *The Modern Review* (Calcutta) has also criticised the Doctor's thesis on almost parallel lines.

As for the dead set made against poor Shakespeare by these learned critics because he does not satisfy their serious minds as a thinker, a philosopher, a mystic, and a religious teacher, may I ask why they go to a mere player-poet-dramatist for deep thinking and philosophy and mysticism and what not? With Shakespeare, "the play's the thing"—and also the poetry. And if we get both these good things in such rich measure, shouldn't we thank Heaven fasting for what we do get, instead of making ourselves unhappy (and perhaps, ridiculous) because the swan ("or goose") of Avon does not give us these superior things which are undoubtedly soul-satisfying but which are rather irrelevant on the Stage?

I have no doubt that in his forthcoming book Mr. Allen will prove to the hilt Chapman's superiority over Shakespeare as a thinker or philosopher. And yet, while this half-literate poacher and plagiarist of Stratford is read and asked for and *enjoyed* to-day—in spite of his poor intellect and tiresome quibbling and atrocious ribaldry—three hundred years after his death, who even *reads* Chapman?

J. S.

[This Correspondence is now closed. —EDS.]

ENDS AND SAYINGS

"————————*ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."

HUDIBRAS.

The devil cannot only cite Scripture for his purpose, but he can also use the device of holy magic for his nefarious ends. We are not concerned with the political programme of Hitlerism, but we cannot forgo the duty of expressing our sympathy with the sufferers in Germany and our abhorrence of the immoral deeds perpetrated against the ideal of Brotherhood, in the name of Aryan Culture. The latter is the Culture of Nobility, the robe ever donned by the Noble Souls—one of whom was Jesus, the Jew. The evil displayed in Germany to-day is an expression of the same spirit which animated of old the Jews in Judea and against which Jesus fought. These German evil doers are enemies of Aryan Culture—enemies of Krishna and Buddha. Using the Svastika as a design, they have smirched a noble and spiritual symbol. The Svastika represents the conjoint action of Pramanthâ and Arni, the Sticks and the Censer, which the Magicians of old India used in order to produce Agni, which became *Ignis* with the Latins—Fire of Wisdom. But the Fire scorches as well as warms, and who knows how soon the insulted Svastika will not, as a boomerang, return and destroy the destroyer?

———

Reflecting on the self-destruction of two publicists, Miss Dorothy Massingham, the dramatist-actress, and Mr. Justice McCardie, a writer in *The Manchester Guardian* concludes thus:

> Suicide is becoming increasingly common and is surely a symptom (if yet another were needed) that all is not well with our modern civilisation. It seems useless to demand that we should return to the simpler life of our ancestors; rather it suggests that our leaders of thought should provide us with a philosophy which will enable us to support more patiently the ills of the common round, to maintain throughout that zest for life which is our heritage at birth. Perhaps only that religious revival of which some think they see the signs will supply the remedy for this sickness of the soul, will give the courage necessary to face the burden of life to our nerve-ridden generation of to-day.

A new philosophy or a religious revival for the soul-sickness of this nerve-ridden generation! Philosophy implies knowledge; religion implies belief; the two combined may produce a rational scheme of life. People need such, but do they want it? It is not that people do not know what the ideal of life is; nor is it that they cannot learn if they choose how to live and realise the ideal. Our long Theosophical experience is that individuals who *want* to transform their lives succeed in orienting themselves. Such go for-

ward, contented in their virtue-power and its further unfoldment, while not neglecting to strive against weakness and vice. No, the trouble is not lack of perception, but the lack of will to act up to that perception. And then, the greatest enemy of those who strive—" fortune's favoured soldiers," the *Gita* calls them—is our civilization. In the form of friends and kin, in the shape of customs and conventionalities, they meet their tempter, who coaxes and cajoles, then remonstrates and denounces, then ridicules and ostracises them, and, finally, if they resist all that,—*abandons* them. The injunction of St. Paul holds good to-day—" Come out from among them and be ye separate." Those who aspire to *live* as Jesus and Gautama and Krishna taught and exhorted their public to live, have to recognize that our civilization is a spiritual desert over which a mighty simoom is blowing. No wonder that *The Manchester Guardian* remarks that " there are few quiet spaces for the brain-worker to-day "—and fewer still, we may add, for the soul-creator. He has to contend against " our mechanical age, its noise, its ceaseless activity ". He has " to make himself an island which no flood can overwhelm," as the Buddha taught.

Apropos of noise, a district justice in Dublin once made the remark that " there will be a particular department in Hell, and there will be nothing in it but jazz bands, gramophones, loud-speakers, and motor horns, all going at the same time ". We agree. And certainly he describes one sub-plane of hell; this hell is our earth—the only hell there is, and it is of our own making. The presence of jazz and other cacophonous sounds in our midst is not an expression of lawlessness in Nature, but an outcome of man's own doing. History repeats itself. The law of periodicity is ever at work, bringing forth good from ancient good and ill from evils of ages gone by. Mr. Ernest Newman wrote last year in *The Sunday Times* that eighteen hundred years ago Lucian related a story about " what happened when that half-wit Dionysus, accompanied by other Bright Young People of his epoch descended upon the old civilization of India ". The Hindus, it would appear, underrated the insidiousness of the then jazz music. " Sure of their ancient strength, they were reluctant to go to the trouble of taking the field against this strange and essentially comic army." They had no other weapons except their ancient culture and their elephants, but these were " no use against a poison in the veins ". Underlying this fantasy of Lucian, in which Dionysus and his crew are made to invade India, there is sufficient justification for Mr. Newman's remark that " the jazz hordes are clearly the reincarnations of certain primitive forces of old ".

Lady Astor, M. P., must appear old-fashioned to these bright young people. She did not hesitate breaking their idol of self-expression at the Foyle Literary Luncheon. *Everyman* of May 6th prints in part her speech. Lady Astor deplored the "sex bat" of modern literature, and had little faith in "the youthful movement of self-expression". She said: "It has been my experience that whenever a man or a woman say they want to express themselves, they want to do something they do not want anyone elso to see." The younger generation will repudiate such an interpretation, but this will not perturb Lady Astor. She does not believe "that the young people of the world can make the world right," and is herself "young enough to know they cannot do it". But who or what is responsible for this state of moral chaos among the young of which Lady Astor complains? In *Time and Tide* for May 20th, we read:—

> Daily from stage and screen and the printed page, this generation is subjected to a cumulative influence suggesting that the flesh controls the spirit, and that, if physical needs are satisfied, all will be well.

That flesh controls spirit is a maxim of destruction; it is heard in jazz music, and it is receiving added approbation, as the above quotation suggests. *Facilis descensus Averni.* To what people does Lady Astor look for salvation?

> It is the old men and women who ought to have the courage of their convictions, and have convictions, and stand up for them whether popular or not. These are the people that are going to lead us into the paths of peace and sanity.

The young people would accept a spiritual lead but they will no longer have anything to do with "the false gods of the old theology". Lady Astor goes on:—

> I believe the young people are thinking and they are testing us, not by what we say but by what we are. If they feel that we have failed, it is because we have given them so little substance of what God is.

But does Lady Astor—or do any of the old and young people—know what God is? If they do, then why not spread broadcast the glad tidings? "The false gods of the old theology" have been overthrown—so much the better—but what has been set up in their stead? For the most part, the gospel of self-expression. To find out what God is *not* is an easier task than to find out what God is.

But we need not despair. Centuries of subjection have not yet congealed the life-blood of men into crystals around the nucleus of blind faith; and the twentieth is witnessing the struggles of the giant as he shakes off the Liliputian cordage and rises to his feet. What is needed is the strength to seek the Light and to resist the temptation to succumb to mental laziness, the mother of every vice. Courageous seeking ever brings its reward. Two ever-recurring questions oppress the minds of men to-day: Where, Who, What is God? Who ever

saw the Immortal Spirit of Man so as to be able to assure himself of man's immortality?

What answers can our civilization make? In our next number will appear an article on "Man and His God," by Mr. J. D. Beresford, dealing with this subject, which will also be considered in the editorial.

In *Everyman* (April 22nd) attention was drawn to a correspondence between the late Mr. Galsworthy and the Rev. John Hedley. The latter, reading in serial form, *The White Monkey*, wrote to the author protesting against his use of the name "Confucius" for a pug dog. He wrote:—

> I think I know the Chinese people fairly well, and I am sure that they will resent the use of that name for a dog. Don't think me extravagant if I say that I would as soon think of naming a dog after the Man of Nazareth as after the Sage of China.

Mr. Galsworthy, on receipt of this letter, immediately took steps to rectify his mistake. He had called the pug "Confucius" because in his book he was giving a picture of "modern youth in all its irreverence," but he had not realised that his book might reach China, and give offence. "The last thing I would wish to do," he wrote, "is to hurt the feelings of the Chinese, for whom I have a great admiration." But although in his own case Mr. Galsworthy righted the wrong, the irreverence not only of youth but also of trade has extended to wider fields. The feelings of the ancient nations are often ruthlessly flouted, and one may see a picture of the Buddha engraved on cigarette cases, or even an image of Him on an ash tray. This is sheer blasphemy and is partly due to the ignorance of materialism rather than wilful insult. But for the most part the Christian religion is to blame, for it has inculcated the idea that all Gods save its own are false Gods, and all prophets, save those that adorn the pages of the Old Testament, are false prophets. This narrow-minded and false conception, entirely contrary to the spirit of Christ's teaching, has become part of the race-mind of the West. A lack of brotherly feeling and of imagination blinds the Western mind to the religious sensibilities of Eastern nations. It is pleasant to read of Mr. Hedley's protest—that is Christianity of the right kind. As to Mr. Galsworthy—nothing less could have been expected of a mind so generous.

We are glad to see from its June number that *The Adelphi* has completed its ten years of useful career. It was started by one of our esteemed contributors, Mr. John Middleton Murry.

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